Vol. VI. No. 2 APRIL, 1957

TAMIL CULTURE

JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 85

VERBAL NOUN IN EARLY OLD TAMIL
Kamil Zvelebil 87

THE PROBLEM OF THE AGE OF KAMBAN (Continued)
A. C. Paul Nadar 92

HISTORICAL IDEAS IN EARLY TAMIL LITERATURE
K. K. Pillay 113

" ALGUMMIM " OR " ALMUGGIM " OF THE BIBLE
P. Joseph 133

KAMBA RAMAYANAM — HIRANYA-VADAI-PADALAM (Or the Slaying of Hiranya)
V. Shanmuga Mudaliar 139

NEWS AND NOTES 153

SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION 157

THE TAMIL SCRIPT 159

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Commemoration Numbers

This year is important being the centenary year of two outstanding events in India, which have a special significance for Tamilians, *viz.*, the publication of the first Indian Comparative Grammar and the establishment of the Universities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

The credit for making a comprehensive study of any Indian group of languages and publishing a scholarly work on it for the first time goes to Dr. Robert Caldwell. To him also goes the credit for establishing beyond doubt that the Dravidian languages form a distinct family; at his time, to quote his own words, "it was supposed by the Sanskrit Pandits (by whom everything with which they were acquainted was referred to a Brahmanical origin), and too hastily taken for granted by the earlier European Scholars, that the Dravidian languages, though differing in many particulars from the North Indian idioms, were equally with them derived from the Sanskrit". Though the Science of linguistics, which was in its infancy a century ago, has made great advances during this period and though many facts unknown to Dr. Caldwell have since come to light invalidating some of his findings, his broad conclusions remain unchallenged and his work *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages* is still the only one of its kind. The world of linguists in general, and Tamilians in particular owe a deep debt to him and, in commemoration of the centenary of the publication of his classic work, the Academy of Tamil Culture has decided to publish the ensuing October issue of *Tamil Culture* as Dr. Caldwell's Centenary Commemoration issue.

Although Bombay and Calcutta share with Madras the centenary celebration of the establishment of the first modern universities in India, Tamilians have special cause

to rejoice in that a Tamil linguistic scholar has, for the first time, been bracketed with men of international repute who have distinguished themselves in various walks of life, both Indian and Foreign. This is undoubtedly a great personal tribute to Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, who was the recipient of the honorary Degree of Doctor of Literature at the Centenary Celebrations of the University of Madras but it is also a recognition by the University of the important position which Tamil is entitled to occupy in the sphere of University education, which position was only grudgingly, if at all, conceded in the past. The Academy has decided to publish the July issue of *Tamil Culture* as Professor Sethu Pillai Doctorate Commemoration number.

Scholars are invited to contribute articles for both these Commemoration numbers. Contributions for the July issue should reach us before 31st July and those for the October issue before 31st October.

—EDITOR.

Verbal Noun in Early Old Tamil

KAMIL ZVELEBIL

Says J. Bloch in his *Grammatical Structure of Dravidian Languages*, p. 59 : " It therefore seems in the end that the flexional system of the pronominal type had developed secondarily. It follows the usage of the verbal nouns capable of pronominal subjects in the nominative."[1]

Prof. Bloch himself quotes some examples of this use, found in the old Tamil poetry, e.g. யான் பிறக்கு " I shall be born ", or வரற்கே " I will come ", காண்கு வந்து " I shall see having come "—*ibid.* The possible way of development of pronominal verbal flexion from the use of verbal nouns has been shown in a short study in *Archiv Orientalni*, XXIII, pp. 479-81. The object of this article is to show the importance and the different syntactic functions of verbal nouns as found in an Early Old Tamil text, the anthology நற்றிணை 'abbreviated NT'. I shall proceed from the clear cases to those which are more complicated and questionable.

Verbal nouns தொழிற் பெயர் of both tenses[2] are used as subjects of action or state, cf. இல்லிடத்து இற்செறிந்திருத்தல்

[1] Quoted according to the English translation (of the French original) by R. G. Harshè, Poona, 1954.

[2] Are the future and past tenses of Early Old Tamil true tenses ? I am rather inclined to think that, in Old Tamil, the primary and important and maybe original division was not that of true tenses (aorist-future and past) but that of aspects : the verb had, originally, two themes : one for complete action, the other for incomplete action. The instances in Early Old Tamil texts shown clearly that the so called 'future tense' is used for every form of aoristic, incomplete, imperfective or non-temporal action taking place in every temporal sphere (in present, past or future), whereas the so called 'past tense' is used for every form of complete, perfective, momentaneous action (even if taking part, let us say, in the future). Due attention will be paid to this problem in a study dealing with Early Old Tamil syntax as a system.

அறனும் அன்றே lit. "after having lived closed inside in the house—*the stay* is verily not a virtue" (NT 68, 2-3).

Very often, the verbal nouns are found in attributive position, as determinants, cf. அழுங்கல ஊர் "the uproaring village" (NT 63, 5); செய்ம்மேவல் சிறுகட்பன்றி "the hog with small eyes, feeding on a cornfield" (ib. 48,2); புறந் தாழ்பு இருளிய... குரல் 'the dark hair, hanging on the back" (ib. 96, 5, lit. the back—the hanging—darkened . . . hair). In these instances, only the position (determinans preceding determinatum), or, if we want, the taxeme of order, determines the syntactic function; in other cases, the attributive suffix— இன் is employed, cf. பறவை .. மொய்த் தலின் கண் "the eye/determined by/the swarming . . of bees" (NT 55, 5-6).

Still more often, we find the verbal nouns in the function of object, cf. செய்பறியலரே (செய்பு+...) "he does not know the deed" (NT 1, 10); there are some very interesting cases to be noted in this connection—the so-called inner object, where the noun (or, in our special case, the verbal noun) as object is actually in the role of a close determinant of the verb; the noun may be either of the same base, or of the same or very near meaning[3], cf. இயங்கல் செல்லாது... குழவி "the child (sc. of the elephant) not going the walking", i.e. "not knowing how to walk" (NT 47, 2, figura synonymica).

In two spheres of Old Tamil syntax, the verbal nouns had been used most extensively and they had formed very important means to express syntactic relationship.

1. The verbal nouns of the base[4] ஆ —"to become" were used with the morpheme -இன் (originally maybe the

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3 There are some remarkable cases of this inner subject in the form of the "figure etymologica' found in NT, cf. நூழை நுழையும் பொழுதில் "when it enters the small hole" (NT 98, 4)-there is one common etymon used; or வாவல்...தூங்கு துயில் பொழுதின் "at the time when the bat .... sleeps (its) sleep".

4 As far as the terms base, root and stem are concerned; I am inclined to use the term base (or, more in detail, "base conveying the

morpheme of adnominal relation, also the attributive suffix) to express adverbial locution of conclusion : நின்...தோள் எய்தினம் ஆகலின்...வருந்தாதேகு மதி "We have reached thy shoulders, therefore without grief, go thou." (NT 9. and ib. 56, 7) : அருளான் ஆதலின் அழிந்திவண் வந்து "He was not gracious ; therefore, having been afflicted (and) having come here . . . " etc.

2. Also, the final dative of verbal nouns was used to express purpose : நாம் செல்லற்கேமதி வலவ தேரே (NT 21, 4-5) ; "O charioteer, for our going (i.e. for the sake of it) let the chariot go : " or சிவந்த நின் மெல்லடி உயற்கே ... ஏகு மதி (ib. 76) "to escape thy red small feet . . . go thou."

All these cases are more or less clear. Difficulty arises when we investigate into the use of verbal nouns in the function of predicate.

We must distinguish between some cases which seem at least to be evidently clear, where the use of verbal nouns in predicative function is attested also by similar use of verbal nouns in New Tamil (a), and cases which are more problematic and complicated and where the opinion of scholars differs (b).

(a) Let us examine the instance from NT 53, 3 என் கொல் தோழி அன்னை கண்ணியது "What, o friend, has mother thought ?" With this cf. the New Tamil example quoted by Beythan, *Praktische Grammatik der Tamilsprache*, p. 114 எங்கே உட்காருவது ? "Wo ist das niedersetzen ?" — "Wo soll man sich niedersetzen ?" Or, a very similar case : நீயும் நானும் ... கானல் ஆடியது அன்றிக்கரந்து நாம் செய்ததொன்று இல்லை (NT 27) ; and with this, cf. the

meaning") for the basal (or most basic) form of a word, be it a noun or a verb, a pronoun or an adjective ; the root is the basal form of the verb, let us say, செய் — "to do" ; the stem is the root plus temporal or causative or any other morphemes : e.g. செய்கு — is the present, செய்து the past stem of the root செய் — ; மழுக்கு — "to blunt" is the transitive stem of the base (or root) மழு-*கு ; மழுங்கு — "to become blunted, to be dull" is the intransitive stem of the same root etc.

regular New Tamil negative construction like நான் கண்டதில்லை.

Now, these cases are, at first sight, clear enough. But they may still be interpreted in two different ways: 1. as nominal sentences: the verbal noun (கண்ணியது, உட்காருவது etc.) is not, in this case, to be analysed as predicate, but as subject; the predicate, viz. verbum existentiae, is not actually expressed; the 'subject' (அன்னை, நான், நாம்) is not true subject at all, but it is in attributive relation to the verbal noun -result: a nominal sentence, rendered literally (NT 53, 3) "What, a friend, the mother's thought—thing" or "What—scil. was—the things—thought by—the mother?"

This interpretation, however, does not much agree with the fact that this 'attribute' is, often, in the active 'nominative' case, cf. நினக்கு யான் மறைத்தல் யாவது? 'to thee—I—the having been concealed—what?" (NT 72, 4), i.e. "What have I hidden from thee?" This instructive example supports rather the second explanation which also seems to me to be the right one, that the quoted instances are not nominal sentences but, that the predicate is, truly, expressed by the verbal noun (e.g. (மறைத்தல்), capable of pronominal (and substantival) subject in the nominative (active) case, without any question of attributive relation. The symbolic structure of the last quoted example (NT 72, 4) would be

O^2 S P O^1

(Indirect Object in dative—Subject in Nominative—Predicate, verbal noun—Direct Object).

(b) There is a much disputed verbal form in Old Tamil, namely the form with the suffix — al, appearing in the 1st p. sg. aorist-future, cf. சென்று நின் மனையோட்கு உறைப்பல் (100, 6-7) "(I) shall go (and) say (it) to thy wife." But—is there actually any real difference between the verbal noun மறைத்தல் (72, 4) and this 'finite' verbal form? I venture to suggest that the suffix — al even in these aorist-

future formations of 1st p. sg. is nothing else than the suffix of verbal nouns, that actually, the 'finite' forms ending in —al are no 'finite' forms but verbal nouns capable of subjects in nominative, verbal noun in the predicative function.

And, similarly, the disputed suffix — ku in such forms as நோகோ யானே (NT 26, 1) "I have pain", என் செய்கோ (ib. 30, 1) "What shall I do?" These cases are either verbal stems used predicatively, or, which is perhaps more probable, verbal nouns, capable of pronominal subjects in nominative. The suffix — கு is given by ancient grammarians as one of the suffixes constituting the தொழிற் பெயர் and it can be actually found as the morpheme of verbal nouns—cf. போக்கு 'going, departure' from போ- and, to return to Bloch's instance, பிறக்கு 'birth', etc. from பிற.

The Problem of the Age of Kamban *(Continued)*

The Theory of the 9th Century

A. C. PAUL NADAR

(A) The sheet anchor of the champions of the 9th century is a stray stanza referred to in III above beginning with எண்ணிய சகாத்தம் எண்ணூற்றேழின் மேல் found in all manuscripts except the one which was in the possession of Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai. It is certainly found in all the printed editions of *Kamba Ramayanam* in the prefatory portion. V.V.S. Iyer, T.K.C. and others interpret the Saka year referred to in the stanza as 807 corresponding to 895 A.D. This is objected to by Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai for the following among other grounds :—

(a) This date of 885 A.D. would chronologically make Kamban earlier than Alwars such as Thirumangai Alwar and Nammalwar to whom Kambar is alleged to be indebted for idioms, expressions and incidents. (Vide *Kamban Kaviyam,* pp. 143).

(b) The Saka era referred to in the stanza was not in vogue in the Tamilnad until about the end of the 10th century. Hence the stanza in question must have been only a later fabrication. (Vide *Kamban Kaviyam,* pp. 146-147)

(c) The word ' Arangetral ' mentioned in this stanza was originally a technical term and applied to the first performance of a danseuse in the august presence of the king and his assembly. It was never applied in those days to any literary exposition. Hence the stanza must be a fabrication of a later age. (Vide *Kamban Kaviyam,* p. 148)

(d) The reference to 'Kamba Nadan' in the stanza shows that the stanza must have been fabricated sometime after the first use of that word by Arasakesari, the author of *Raghuvamsam* in Tamil, sometime in the 16th century. (Vide pp. 148 & 149 of *Kamban Kaviyam*)

(e) This stanza is not found in the manuscript in the possession of Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai alleged to have been dated "Kollam Andu" 753 corresponding to 1578. Hence that stanza must have come into existence after that manuscript. (Vide *Kamban Kaviyam*, p. 143)

(f) It is a well established fact that Kamban has adopted expressions, ideas and metrical forms of vritham from *Jeevaka Chintamani* of Thiruthakka Thevar belonging to the early part of the 10th century. The acceptance of the stanza will antedate Kamban to Thiruthakka Thevar. Hence it cannot be genuine. (*Tamil Sudarmanigal*, pp. 119—120)

(g) *Kamba Ramayanam* is the product of the Bakthi movement initiated and inspired by the Alwars and Vaishnava Acharyas. The movement was canalised in the story of Rama in the time of Ramanuja (1017-1137 A.D.). Hence we should look for Kamban only after Ramanuja. (Vide *Tamil Sudarmanigal*, pp. 114—115)

The editors of Annamalai University Silver Jubilee Publication of *Sundarakantam* also reject the stanza on grounds mentioned in (d) and (f) above. In addition to *Jeevaka Chintamani* in (f) they add *Chulamani* of Tholamoli Thevar to whom Kamban was according to them indebted for his rhythm.

We now consider the objections in the order given above.

(a) The date assigned to Kamban in the stanza namely 885 A.D. is really later than the times of Thiru-

mangai Alwar and Nammalwar. According to M. Srinivasa Iyengar claimed by Vaiyapuri Pillai to be his authority, Thirumangai Alwar lived in the 8th century. To be exact he must have flourished between 680 and 760 A.D. (vide his *Tamil Studies-First Series,* p. 320). No doubt M. Srinivasa Iyengar came to the conclusion in his studies that Nammalwar must have lived about the beginning of the 10th century. He published his *Tamil Studies* in 1914. Later on, in 1919 T. A. Gopinatha Rao reviewed all the authorities available upto that time including M. Srinivasa Iyengar's work and came to the conclusion that Nammalwar must have lived in the first half of the 9th century. This has received additional support from L. D. Swamikannu Pillai who placed the birth of Nammalwar at 798 A.D. from the astronomical data furnished by Guruparamparai (vide Gopinatha Rao's *The Age of Alwars* Madras University Publication p. 21). Hence no question of making Kamban chronologically earlier than Thirumangai Alwar and Nammalwar arises at all.

(b) As for the use of 'Saka era' in Tamilnad, there is irrefutable evidence to show that it was in vogue at the earliest in the 5th century A.D.

(1) The Jain work *Loka Vibhaga* was copied by one Sivanandi at Patalika (Tirupappuliyoor) and the year of making the copy is given as the Saka year 380 corresponding to 458 A.D. (vide Pandarathar's *History of Tamil Literature* 250—600 A.D.) 1955 Publication of Annamalai University.

(2) Reference may next be made to Gadval Plates (M.A.R. Copper Plate No. 3 of 1903-1910—The Western Chalukya—Vikramaditya I (655-688) mentions his conquest of Kanchi and encampment at Uragapura Tiruchirapalli). They are dated the Saka year 595 corresponding to 674 A.D. (*Epi. Indica,* Vol. X—page 101)

(3) The Aihole inscription of Western Chalukya, King Pulikesin II (609-642) regarding his conquest of

Kanchi makes reference to the Saka year 556 corresponding to 634 A.D. (*Epi.—Indica*, Vol. IV—p. 6)

(4) The Aivarmalai inscription belonging to the 8th regnal year of the Pandyan Varaguna (862-880) A.D. refers to the Saka year 792 coresponding to 870 A.D. (vide *Epi.—Indica*, Vol. XVIII—p. 295)

It may be noted that (1) is a case of literature and is found in South Arcot District, that (2) and (3) are cases of foreign rulers making reference in Tamilnad to their conquests at the time of their stay therein and that No. (4) is a case of inscription found in the heart of the Pandyan country in Madurai District using both the regnal year of the King as well as the Saka year.

Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai accepts (1) as a Colophon in *Loka Vibhaga*, a Jain treatise in Prakrit without any comment. He considers (2) and (3) as not relevant. He thinks the last one is significant and relevant. He has made two comments, which are contradictory of each other.

Comment on Page 83 of Kamban Kaviyam

" சகாப்தம் தமிழ் நாட்டில் 8ம் நூற்றாண்டளவிலேதான் வழங்கத் தொடங்கியது. இவ்வாறு வழங்கத் தொடங்கிச் சில நூற்றாண்டுகள் சென்ற பின்னரே அது பொது மக்களால் வழங்கப்பட்டு காவியங் களில் குறிக்கப்பட்டிருத்தல் கூடும். இங்ஙனம் கொள்வது பெரும்பாலும் உண்மையாதல் சாலும்.

Comment on Page 147 of the same

" From a study of these inscriptions we are compelled to hold that the Jains were the first to introduce the exotic Saka era in the South. For, they came originally from North India where this era was founded and spread gradually in the South with their great learning.

The rulers of Kannada country where Jainism was predominent, adopted first

எனவே சகாப்த வழக்கு கி. பி. 885ல் (9வது நூற்றுண்டு இறுதியில்) தமிழ் நூல்களில் காணப்படுதல் அசம்பாவிதமாம்."

this system of chronology in C. 600 A.D. About 800 A.D. the Aivarmalai inscription was recorded. A century must have elapsed before it found favour with the Tamil Kings, and was introduced by them in their inscriptions. Most probably it came into general vogue about the end of the 10th century A.D."

It may be noted that the first comment assumes that the inscription is a royal act, while the other assumes that it is a transaction of the people. It is sheer speculation that, whether it is a people's transaction or royal act, it would take a century or two for the adoption of the Saka by the other. But, as a matter of fact, Aivarmalai inscription records the renewal of the images of Parsva Bhatarar and Yakshies at Aivarmalai near Palani. It is really a private transaction by the Jain community. The Jains were not only predominent in Kannada country but also in Tamilnad at least from the middle of the 3rd century. (Vide Pandarathar's *History of Tamil Literature* 250-600 A.D., pages 15—28 and *Samanamum—Kongu Nadum* by C. M. Ramachandran Chettiar). Even after their discomfiture at the hands of Sambandar in the middle of the 7th century at Madurai, they seem to have been so influential as to induce subsequent Pandya rulers to lavishly endow their pallis. (Vide K. A. N. Sastry's *Pandyan Kingdom*, p. 95). Hence the objection regarding the Saka era fails.

(c) As for the use of the word " Arangetral " Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai contends that originally it was applied only to the first performance of the "Danseuse " and that it continued to be so restricted until the 14th century. He admits, however, the fact and practice of the presentation of literary works before learned bodies from the days

of Tholkappiyam. The reference to the presentation of the various works relied on by him are the following :—

" நிலந்தரு திருவிற் பாண்டிய னவையத்து
அறங்கரை நாவின் நான்மறை முற்றிய
அதங்கோட் டாசாற்கு அரில்தபத் தெரிந்து
மயங்கா மரபின் எழுத்துமுறை காட்டி "

—தொல்காப்பியம் (பாயிரம்)

" உரைசா லடிகள் அருள மதுரைக்
கூல வாணிகன் சாத்தன் கேட்டனன் "

—சிலப்பதிகாரம்

" இளங்கோ வேந்தன் அருளிக் கேட்ப
வளங்கெழு கூல வாணிகன் சாத்தன்......
அறிய வைத்தனன்."

—மணிமேகலை

" தேனூற நின்று தெருண்டாரவை செப்பலுற்றேன் "

— சீவகசிந்தாமணி

" தேமாண் அலங்கல் திருமால் நெடுஞ்சேந்தன் என்னும்
கோமான் அவையுள் தெருண்டார் கொளப்பட்ட தன்றே "

—சூளாமணி

Kamban Kaviyam, p. 83 and 84.

The word " Arangetral " is not used in the texts cited above, though the practice is vouched for. But we know that the Tamil Sangam at Madurai was constituted for the submission of literary works to its judgement. Whatever we may say about the first two Sangams, the third Sangam was a historical fact. It functioned until about the middle of the 3rd century A.D. (vide pp. 10 to 14 of Pandarathar's *History of Tamil literature* 250-600 A.D.)

Appar Swamigal refers to the existence of the Sangam in one of his Pathihams as follows :—

நன்பாட்டுப் புலவனாய்ச் சங்க மேறி
நற்கனகக் கிழிதருமிக் கருளி னோன்காண்

—(திருப்புத்தூர்–தாண்டகம்)

He belongs to the middle of the 7th Century A.D. The commentary on *Irainar Ahaporul* which cannot be later than the 8th century speaks of " தலைச் சங்கத்தில் கவி யரங்கேறினார் எழுவர் பாண்டிய ரென்ப...... இடைச் சங்கத்தில் கவியரங்கேறினார் மூவர் பாண்டிய ரென்ப " vide *Irainar Ahaporul*—Bhavanandar Kazhagam Edition, pp. 6 & 7). These facts are mentioned in the famous commentary of Adiarku Nallar on *Chilappathikaram* (p. 197 of Swaminatha Iyer's Edition in *Venil Kathai*—First Edition). The words used in the stanza in question are " கண்ணிய அரங்கர் முன்னே கவியரங்கேற்றினேனே " instead of the simple word " Arangetral " அரங்கேற்றல் we have got கவி அரங்கேற்றல். It is therefore idle to contend that the expression "Arangetral" was never applied to the presentation of literary works in the relevant period.

(d) As for the use of the word 'Kamba Nadan' in the stanza in question Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai says that there was never a district known as Kamba Nadu at all, that when the unrivalled genius of the poet became a recognised fact, the secular followers styled him 'Kamba Nadan' creating for him an imaginary Nadu, which he could rule over, that, as a matter of fact, Kamba Nadu was first used in a stanza of Arasakesari (1478-1519), the author of *Raghuvamsa* in Tamil and that therefore the stanza must be a fabrication of the 16th century (vide *Kamban Kaviyam*, p. 149). As stated before under VIII, he himself relies on what he considers as a stanza made on the occasion of the presentation of *Kamba Ramayanam* to the public, it describes the poet not only as Kamba Nadan but also as Kavi Chakravarthi (*Kamban Kaviyam*, p. 127). If there be any truth in it, that at least takes us to the 12th century according to his own showing. Another stanza attributed to Vanian Thatan in *Tamil Navalar Sarithai* refers to 'Kamba Nadan'. " கைம்மணிச் சீரன்றிச் சீறியாக் கம்ப நாடன்." According to tradition, Vanian Thatan was a contemporary of Kamban and was reputed to be the author of Uthara Kanda.

It is interesting to note that Prof. K. A. N. Sastri accepts

the reality of the 'Kamba Nadu' as a fief granted to the poet by the contemporary Chola King even after he adopts the views of Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai in the matter of the date of Kamban. (Vide p. 671 his *Colas* 1955 Edition).

According to the traditional accounts, even the very name of Kamban was at one time considered novel and enquiry was directed about its origin and meaning. Fanciful stories were invented to account for the etymological meaning of Kamban such as "the boy with the stick" (Kambu) or the foundling deserted near the flag-staff of a temple (Kamban). Now, epigraphy discloses such names as கம்பன் அரையன் a chieftain of the Pallava Kingdom, at the end of the 8th century and the beginning of 9th century; கம்ப வர்மன் a petty ruler said to be the brother of the last Pallava King at the end of the 9th century, கம்ப மணியன் commandant of Raja Raja the Great (985-1013 A.D.) and கம்பன் an officer under the same king (vide Annamalai University Silver Jubilee edition *Sundara Kandam* Introduction, p. VI and VII.) அரையன், அரசன், நாடன் mean a ruler ; மணியன் means a village officer. Under such circumstances there is nothing strange about the name 'Kamba Nadan' in the 9th century.

(e) As for the omission of the stanza in question in a manuscript copy of the Andu 753 Kollam Era (corresponding to 1578 A.D.) in the possession of Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai, it does not appear from which this copy was made. The manuscript has to be thoroughly examined as tc its value, in the light of other documents. After all, an argument based on omission is not a serious one in a land where there is no sense of historical value or literary purity. It is well known that additions and subtractions have been made to the text from time to time. One Velliambala Thambiran is alleged to have introduced his own verses in the text. Innumerable readings of the text suggest that copyists meddled with the text or were not accurate in copying. In this state of affairs, the omission of the stray stanza need

not be taken very seriously unless we have got other substantial evidence.

(f) The question of fixing the date of Thiruthakka Thevar, the author of *Chintamani,* is not an easy one. It is as difficult to determine as, if not more than, the date of Kamban. There is absolutely nothing in the text of *Chintamani* to enable us to fix his time. The Jain tradition is persistent that he was connected with the scholars of Mathurai Tamil Sangam, who were alleged to have been the instrument of making him sing sweetly of the pleasures of the life of senses. Hence, *Chintamani* was a new venture in Jain literary productions, contrary to their ascetic ideal. (Vide the life of Thiruthakka Thevar in Swaminatha Iyer's *Chintamani*). If there be any truth in it, he must be connected with the 3rd Tamil Sangam which cannot be later than the middle of the 3rd century as stated before. No scholar is however inclined to accept this date for *Chintamani.* A fourth Sangam seems to have functioned sometime in the 7th and 8th century, though not so influential as the 3rd Sangam (vide M. Srinivasa Iyengar's *Tamil Studies* 1st series p. 254). According to Pandarathar, a Tamil Sangam functioned earlier in the 5th century under the auspices of the Jains. (Vide Pandarathar's *History of Tamil Literature* 250—600, p. 46.)

Narivirutham is said to be a minor work of Thiruthakka Thevar. The learned editor of the poem, Sri M. Raghavaiyangar, has no doubt that it is the genuine production of Thevar, as it has the ring of *Chintamani.* The Jain tradition supports it. Appar Swamigal refers to *Narivirutham* in one of his pasurams. (*Adipurana Tirukurunthokai*) Sri M. Raghavaiyangar is of opinion that the reference by Appar Swamigal is to Thevar's *Narivirutham* and none other. If so, Thevar must belong to the period earlier than the middle of the 7th century to which Appar belongs. In that case Thevar may belong to the 4th Sangam of M. Srinivasaiyangar or the Jain Sangam of Pandarathar.

The astronomical data given for the time of marriage of Jeevakan with Gandarva Dathayar yield 813 A.D. as the date of the wedding. If this date and the event be accepted, the composition of *Chintamani* cannot be earlier than 813 A.D. But the infirmity about this data is that it is of a cyclic nature and is likely to answer to a later or an earlier date. Whether, Thevar composed his *Chintamani* in the 5th, in the 7th or in the early part of the 9th century, he was earlier than Kamban envisaged in the stanza in question. S. Krishnaswami Iyengar, M. Srinivasa Iyengar and T. A. Gopinatha Rao fixed the age of Thiruthakka Thevar at about 900 A.D. In that case, Thiruthakka Thevar must have been a contemporary of Kamban in the light of the same stanza in question.

Thiruthakka Thevar does not give any indication as to the source of his poem. It appears that there had been several accounts of Jeevaka in Sanskrit before the composition of *Chintamani*, when once the story was invented, it must have grown by receiving additions in course of time at the hands of the Jain expositors. Apart from Sanskrit works, there must have been oral traditional accounts in the various regions where Jainism prevailed. The question is what was the source for the author of *Chintamani* ? From an inscription, it appears that Jain sage Gunabhadra composed *Uttarapurana* containing the story of Jeevaka in Sanskrit in the reign of Rashtrakuta ruler Krishna II known also as Akalavarsha in the Saka year 820 (corresponding to 898 A.D.). According to some scholars *Chintamani* is based on *Uttarapurana* ; others think *Ksathrachudamani* of Vadibhasimha, itself based on the *Uttarapurana* of Gunabhadra is the source for *Chintamani*. If this inference be correct, *Chintamani* must be later than 898 A.D. This is the sheet anchor of those who assert that *Chintamani* belongs to the 10th century. The difficulty is that the comparison of the various books and the traditions dealing with Jeevaka cannot be considered exhaustive. Mere similarities in such Puranic stories are not sufficient. In

the absence of a thorough investigation, it is not conclusive to adopt a date later than 898 A.D. as a definite land mark to fix the age of Thiruthakka Thevar. The author of *Chintamani* seems to have been held in the highest esteem in the world of Jainism (vide the famous inscription at Sravana Belgola—*Ep. Indica* Vol. III, p. 190-1.) It is significant that Thevar does not refer to the great author Gunabhadra so well known for his sanctity and political influence at the court of the one of the greatest South Indian rulers. It may be that Gunabhadra was inspired by Thevar ; such a possibility need not be excluded in the circumstances of the traditional accounts. The acceptance of the 10th century as the age of Thiruthakka Thevar raises another difficulty. There is no trace of any Tamil Sangam in that century (vide Srinivasa Pillai's *Tamil Varalaru*, pp. 204 to 207 and K. A. N. Sastri's *Colas*, p. 666, Revised Edition 1955).

We have now to deal with another tradition connecting Kamban with *Chintamani*. In his introduction to *Jeevaka Chintamani*, 3rd edition Dr. Swaminatha Iyer refers to an old document of which he does not give the age and in which it is suggested that Kamban himself acknowledged that he took a spoonful from *Chintamani*. This is said to be in reply to a suggestion at the time of his arangetral that the phrase வெள்ளி வெண்கடலின் in stanza No. 133 of விபீடணன் அடைக்கலப் படலம் seemed to be an echo from *Chintamani*. If this traditional story be correct, Kamban must have composed his poem long after the composition of *Chintamani*. Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai adds that Kamban was indebted to Thiruthakka Thevar for words, phrases, sentiments, ideas and metrical forms. He cited 3 parallel stanzas to show that the former borrowed from the latter.

Jeevaka Chintamani.

1. வாளினால் பேச லல்லால்
வாயினால் பேசல் தேற்றேன்.
(257)

Kamba Ramayanam.

வில்லி னாற்சொலி னல்லது வெந்
திறல் வெள்கச்
சொல்லி னாற்சொலக் கற்றிலம்
யாமெனச் சொன்னான்.
(குமபகர்ணன் வதை 255)

2. துன்ப முற்றவர்க்கலால் இன்பமில்லை யாதலின் (579)	துன்புள தெனினன்றே சுகமுளது (கங்கைப் படலம் 69)
3. விருந்தாயினை யெறிநீயென விரைமார்பகங் கொடுத்தாற் கரும்பூணற வெறிந்தாங்கவ னினை தூழினி யெனவே. (2265)	இணையாருமி லவனேர்தர எய்தா வலி செய்தாய் அணையாயினி யென்தூழென அடராவெளி படரா. (முதற்போர்ப் படலம் 180)

(vide *Tamil Chudarmanikal*, pp. 119 to 120).

The words, phrases and sentiments cited above are, however, so common that it is difficult to say that Kamban borrowed them from the other poet, even though he sang his poem later. It is possible that the historical method of enquiry would reverse the position by making Thevar indebted to Kamban. Perhaps both of them were contemporaries, and had a common heritage. Both were men of genius. But Thevar had the background of declining Jainism painfully conscious of a discovery of its unpopularity as the result of its arid ascetic ideal and of the necessity for making concessions to the satisfaction of lower desires in order to gain popularity. Kambar was inspired by the creative movement of bakthi generated by the Alwars and Nayanars and enriched by a sympathetic study of Sanskrit literature. In terms of Western literature, Thevar was a classic in the long tradition of Sangam poets without their realism. Kamban was a romantic with a free spirit of adventure, though he too had a mastery of Sangam classics. Indeed, he was a happy blend of both classicism and romanticism. In the matter of architectonics, Thevar was a tyro ; his *Chintamani* is a string of unconnected wedding episodes and does not move by any internal law of development to a necessary end ; but Kamban was a supreme artist, whether you take his entire poem of Ramayanam as a whole or in parts. If the works of these two poets are studied in the above perspective, any theory as to indebtedness of the one to the other in the matter of poetic diction, idioms and technique would seem to be puerile, if not meaningless.

As for the alleged metrical indebtedness of Kambar to Thevar, it is an established fact that Kamban was an unrivalled master of Vritham metre. An old saying of a poet is விருத்தம் என்னும் ஒண்பாவில் உயர் கம்பன். Indeed, Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai himself in another place waxes eloquent in describing the metrical talent of Kamban. He says Kamban was not a blind follower of poetical tradition, he was a daring genius and iconoclast . . . . He made ever new experiments in metre and words and produced a harmony never achieved before. He set up in fact a new tradition which began to find followers. Thus he exercised an adverse influence against the current notions of poetry. The poets of his age looked down upon this as heresy and taunted him with his humble birth" (p. 151, *Kamban Kaviyam*). If he was really an imitator or even in the line of the tradition of metrical evolution started by others, it is difficult to see how he could have been found guilty of heresy. Neither the learned Professor nor the editors of Annamalai University Silver Jubilee Publication, who also believe that Kamban was indebted to Thevar for metrical perfection of Vritham, explain how this was so. It is worth the study of scholars to find out the part played by Thevar and Kambar in the evolution of the metre called Vritham. In the same manner, it is worthwhile to find out whether Kamban owed anything to *Choolamani* for his rhythm.

So far as the matter in hand is concerned, the objection of Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai to the stanza beginning with எண்ணிய சகாத்தம் எண்ணூற்றேழு on the basis of the chronological priority of *Chintamani* to *Kamba Ramayanam* lacks substantial evidence and requires further investigation from various angles.

(g) Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai relies on stanza No. 37 of இராமானுஜ நூற்றந்தாதி reading as படிகொண்ட கீர்த்தி இராமாயணமென்னும் பக்தி வெள்ளம், குடிகொண்ட கோயிலிராமாநுஜன் . . . . . . for his conclusion that the bakthi movement

was canalised in the story of Rama in the time of Ramanuja. (1017 to 1137 A.D., vide *Tamil Chudarmanigal,* p. 114). He seemed to have thought that Ramayanam was not so popular in Tamilnad until then. He realised the untenability of this view in his later book, *Kamban Kaviyam,* p. 153 wherein he has stated—" we see that the story of Rama had been exercising a potent influence in the Tamil land from the earliest times ", namely early centuries of the Christian Era. But he added that the pietistic school in the 11th century and later, embellished the story and expounded it in a vivid conversational style. Evidently by the pietistic school he means the later Vaishnava Acharyas including Ramanuja. In this connection it is relevant to consider what Prof. K. A. N. Sastri has to say about this period. " It is curious that few works of religious literature seem to have been composed in Tamil by the Vaishnavas of the Tamil country in the period . . . . There is ample evidence to show that a succession of great Vaishnava Acharyas composed numerous devotional poems and philosophical works in the Sanskrit language in this period ; Yamunacharya, Yadavaprakasa and Ramanuja himself are only the leading examples of a large group of authors justly celebrated for their learning and devotion and for their literary achievements. Strangely enough, however, Vaishnavism which started as a popular movement of Religious reform and revival, appears to have developed in the Cola period a sort of highbrow attitude and scorned the use of the popular idiom ; in fact the writers of this school developed in course of time a quaint style more Sanskritised than Tamil in its make-up which is seen at its best in the great commentaries of Periya-vachan Pillai and Nambillai. Among the works composed in this style of writing, one of the earliest is the short commentary, *Arayirappadi* on Nammalvar's *Thiruvaymoli* by Kurugaipiran Pillai, a relative and disciple of Ramanuja." (*The Colas*—Revised Edition 1955, p. 681.)

This is the period which Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai wants up to look for Kamban !

We have examined the various objections of Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai. We find none of them is sufficient to discredit the stanza relied on by V.V.S. Aiyer, T.K.C. & others for placing Kamban in the 9th century. But there is no evidence to prove who composed the stanza and when it was composed. If it was a comtemporary stanza on the occasion of the arangetral of *Kamba Ramayanam*, it is well and good. If not, the question is how long after arangetral it was composed. What was the source of the knowledge of the date ? If it was forged at a later time, what was the motive for it ? These are legitimate questions to be considered.

If it be a forgery of the 16th century as contended by Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai, it seems to be strange that the date of 885 A.D. (Saka year 807) is pitched upon without reference to any ruler either Chola or Pallava. The author of the stanza in question has shown a rare knowledge of the history of the period, which we now begin to understand after a laborious research of nearly a century by an army of scholars and research workers. For, that period marks the fall of the Pallavas, and the rise of the Cholas of the dynasty of Vijayala. The stanza does full justice to Kamban's patron Sadayan, who is directly mentioned in the text of the poem as many as ten times.

(B) The second ground of the champions of the 9th century relates to the evidence of the age of Sadayan, the patron of Kamban. The poet refers to Sadayan directly in the following stanzas.

நடையி னின்றுயர் நாயகன் றோற்றத்தி
னிடைநி கழ்ந்த விராமாவ தாரப்பேர்த்
தொடைநி ரம்பிய தோமறு மாக்கதை
சடையன் வெண்ணெய் நல்லூர்வயிற் றந்ததே. 1

—**பாயிரம்**

விண்ணவர் போய பின்றை விரிந்தபூ மழையி னூலே
தண்ணெனுங் கான நீங்கித் தாங்கருந் தவத்தின் மிக்கோன்

மண்ணவர் வறுமை நோய்க்கு மருந்தன சடையன் வெண்ணெய்
யண்ணறன் சொல்லே யன்ன படைக்கல மருளி னானே. 2

—(பாலகாண்டம்-வேள்விப்படலம்)

வண்ண மாலை கைபரப்பி யுலகை வளைந்த விருளெல்லா
முண்ண வெண்ணித் தண்மதியத் துதயத் தெழுந்த நிலாக்கற்றை
விண்ணு மண்ணுந் திசையனைத்தும் விழுங்கிக் கொண்ட விரிநன்னீர்ப்
பண்ணை வெண்ணெய்ச் சடையன்றன் புகழ்போ லெங்கும் பரந்துள
தால் 3

(மிதிலைகாண படலம் ௭௪)

மஞ்செனத் திகழ்தரு மலையை மாருதி
யெஞ்சலிற் கடிதெடுத் தெறிய வேநளன்
விஞ்சையிற் றாங்கினன் சடையன் வெண்ணெயிற்
றஞ்ச மென்றோர்களைத் தாங்குந் தன்மைபோல். 4

—(யுத்த காண்டம் சேதுபந்தனப் படலம்)

வாசங் கலந்த மரைநாள நூலின் வகையென்ப தென்னை மழையென்
றாசங்கைகொண்ட கொடைமீளி யண்ணல் சரராமன்வெண்ணெ
யணுகுந்
தேசங் கலந்த மறைவாணர் செஞ்சொ லறிவாள ரென்றிம் முதலோர்
பாசங் கலந்த பசிபோ லகன்ற பதகன் றுரந்த வுரகம். 5

(ஷை நாகபாசப் படலம் ௨௬௩)

அரியணை யநுமன் றாங்க வங்கத னுடைவாள் வாங்கப்
பரதன்வெண் கவிகை யேந்த விருவருங் கவரி பற்ற
விரைசெறி குழலி யோங்க வெண்ணெய்மன் சடையன் வண்மை
மரபுளோர் கொடுப்ப வாங்கி வசிட்டனே புனைந்தான் மௌலி. 6

(ஷை ஷை ௩௮)

According to the first stanza, the *Kamba Ramayanam* was produced at Vennai Nalloor of Sadayan. According to the second, he was a generous man, who relieved the hunger of mankind and he was a man of his word. The third stanza describes his fame, spreading like the cool moon shine of the full moon night. The fourth refers to him as the generous patron of Tamil poets and Sanskrit Vedic scholars. The last one mentions that his clan had the right to present the crown to kings at the time of their coronation. There is, however, no specific act or deed of an historic nature indicating his age.

V. V. S. Iyer points out two inscriptions of the Vishnu Temple of Ukkal somewhere between Kancheepuram and Wandiwash in Chingleput District (vide Inscriptions Nos. 5 & 8 of Vol. III of S.I.I.) to indicate his age.

The English translation of No. 5 reads as follows.

Hail prosperity ! In the fifteenth year of the reign of Kambavarman : The writing of us, the assembly of Ukkal, we have received one thousand kadi of paddy from Sadayan.

We the assembly shall close (sluices of) the tank to collect water for irrigation and shall cause five hundred kadi of paddy to be supplied every year as interest on those one thousand kadi of paddy. We declare that those who disobey this shall incur all the sins committed between the Ganga & Kumari. The great men elected for the year shall cause (the paddy) to be supplied.

No. 8 reads as follows :

Hail prosperity ! in the tenth year of the reign of Kambavarman, Sadayan gave four hundred kadi of paddy to the assembly. From the interest on this paddy which amounts to one hundred kadi of paddy per year, we the assembly of Ukkal shall feed two Brahmins daily as long as the earth and sun exist. If we fail in the feeding of guests, we the assembly shall incur all the sins committed within seven hundred kadams between the Ganga and Kumari.

These two inscriptions evidence an agreement between one Sadayan and the Mahasabha at Ukkal for keeping the village tank in repair and for feeding two Brahmins. They do not however indicate either the place of Sadayan's residence or his status. He was perhaps so great or so well known that his address was not thought necessary. The generosity of the donor in the inscription bears out the tribute paid by Kamban in the above said stanzas. Still the difficulty arises whether this Sadayan was the patron

of Kamban for want of specific evidence. From the traditional account mentioned in *Chola Mandala Sathakam* and *Tamil Navalar Sarithai* on the one hand and inscriptions at Muvaloor (M.A.R. No. 29 of 1925) and of Thirukkodika (M.A.R. No. 58 of 1930) on the other, we hear of other Sadayans. Sadayan of Ukkal inscription is certainly the earliest; for, the other inscriptions through undated, are said to be later than or about the twelfth century. Ukkal inscriptions belong to the tenth and fifteenth year of Kambavarman who is said to be the younger son of Nandivarman III of *Nandikalambakam* fame and brother of Aparajithan (882-890 A.D.) and seems to have ruled over a small portion of Northern Thondai Mandalam after the conquest of Pallava Kingdom by the Chola King Aditya I. As many as twenty inscriptions are found in the Chingleput and North Arcot Districts referring to Kambavarman's rule. Sadayan of Ukkal inscriptions is therefore a man of the last quarter of the 9th century and hence a contemporary of Kamban, visualised in the stray stanza.

It is inexplicable that Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai and others of his way of thinking have nothing to say about Ukkal inscriptions which they simply ignore.

(c) The champions of the ninth century rely on the first line of the first stanza of *குலமுறை கிளத்துப்படலம்* reading as *ஆதித்தன் குலமுதல்வன் மனுவினையார் அறியாதார்* as a distinct reference to the Chola King Aditya I (871-907). He was the conqueror of the Pallava kingdom roughly about 890 A.D. But the settlement of the newly conquered territory must have taken years and may have involved fresh campaigns. It is highly doubtful whether Kamban who had the arangetram of his poem in 885 A.D. specially referred to the future conqueror of the Pallava territory. The context makes it clear that the name of Aditya refers to the Solar race of Ayodhya rulers. It is significant that *Kamba Ramayanam* makes no reference to any ruler of Tamilnad by his natural or his proper name *சென்னி பேரமலன்* in *பில*

நீங்கு படலம்-35 is too general to identify it with any Chola ruler. சென்னி is a family name of all Chola rulers. Amalan (அமலன்) occurs in *Kulothunga Cholanula* line 157 along with அனகன் and அதுலன் and does not seem to apply to any one Chola king in particular (vide *Tamil Chudarmanikal,* pp. 126—7). As for the identification of அமலன் with Uttama Chola by the Editors of Annamalai University Silver Jubilee Publication *Sundarakandam,* we will deal with it later. The only other reference is to வீரன் தியாக விநோதன் of which we have already dealt with. From these the champions of the 9th century argue that there was no eminent ruler in the time of Kamban and hence he did not mention any. The opposite school of thought however contend that this circumstance shows that Kamban was treated in a hostile manner by the contemporary Chola king and several stories were invented to show the nature of the quarrel between them. Our suggestion is that if in the light of the stray stanza in question, Kamban belongs to the period of interregnum between the fall of the Pallavas and the rise of the later Cholas, the absence of any reference to any one particular ruler is quite natural.

(d) V. V. S. Iyer relied on another circumstance namely the absence of any reference to Tanjore. Gangaikonda-Cholapuram, Madurai, Puhar, Uranthai and Palayarai in *Kamba Ramayanam.* It is full of the colour and atmosphere of the land of the Cauvery, the poet's home country and it is significant that he did not mention or even echo any thing about the mighty towns and palaces raised by the later Cholas. The poet is not conscious of their great achievements in building an empire and extending it overseas. V. V. S. Iyer therefore thought that Kamban must have lived earlier than the empire of the later Cholas. This also, would confirm the genuineness of the stanza in question. (Vide his edition of *Balakandam*—introduction).

We now take up the case of the champions of the 10th century. Their reasons are 1. The identification of 'Amalan' அமலன் with Uttama Cholan (970-85). 2. The

stanza beginning with ஆவின் கொடைச்சகரர் ஆயிரத்து நூறொழித்து relied on by the champions of the 12th century with a different interpretation.

The first reason is untenable. The stanza reads :

புவிபுகழ் சென்னி பேரமலன் தோள்புகழ்
கவிகள் தம்மனையென கனக ராசியும்
சவியுடைத் தூசுமென் சாந்து மாலையும்
அவிரிழைக் குப்பையும் அளவில் லாதது. —பிலநீங்கு படலம் 35

If Kamban really wanted to do honour to the ruling Cholas, it is difficult to see that he would have chosen to do it in such an obscure place such as பிலநீங்கு படலம் and that too in the form of a comparison. We are unable to understand how ‘Amalan’ and Uttaman are one and the same term. The one is negative, meaning faultlessness ; the other is positive, connoting active virtue. As already stated ‘Amalan’ is a term used in a general sense, which is applicable to all Chola rulers, at any rate in the view of Court poets. Apart from the assertion that the terms mean same things, they do not give reasons for their identification.

As for the second reason, the learned editors stand on a stronger ground. As already stated the expression ஆயிரத்து நூறொழித்து literally means a thousand deducting one hundred ; that answers to Saka year 900 corresponding to 978 A.D. This date certainly falls within the reign of Uttama Cholan (970-985). But the problem about this stanza is as already stated that no one knows when and by whom this stanza was composed, besides the very many difficulties pointed out *supra* in accepting this. In any case it requires other corroborative evidence in support of this date 978 A.D.

We have seen the conclusion of various schools. The earliest date assigned for Arangetram of *Kamba Ramayanam* is 885 A.D. and the latest 1185 A.D. There is a gap of nearly 300 years. These years saw the foundation, growth and decline of the empire of the later Cholas. The most

glorious epoch of Tamil history falls within this period. Under Rajaraja I (985-1013) the Chola kingdom grew to be an empire, and under his son and grandsons (1025-1069) it reached its height, and under them it spread overseas over the Indian ocean in South East Asia including a great portion of Indonesia. The earliest date assigned by V. V. S. Iyer and others places Kamban in the period of the rise of Cholas before the foundation of the empire, while the latest date assigned by Vaiyapuri Pillai and others places him at its decline and the date assigned by the Annamalai University Silver Jubilee Publication places him at an advanced stage of its growth before it became an Empire. Now, the question arises whether Kamban lived before or after the rise of the later Chola Empire or when that empire was at its zenith.

(*To be continued*)

Historical Writing on the Peoples of Asia
South Asia Seminar

Historical Ideas in Early Tamil Literature

K. K. PILLAY

INTRODUCTION :

It is indisputable that professedly historical works are conspicuous by their absence in early India. Several writers, commencing with Alberuni, the discerning scholar who visited the country in the 11th century A.D., have observed that Indians of the past, despite their high intellectual attainments, lacked the historic spirit. This feature is as much true of the Tamils as of the rest of the Indians.

However, the Sangam classics, comprising the extant literary works of the early Tamils, contain extraordinarily abundant data of historical value. They throw a flood of light on the political, and still more on the social and religious conditions of the early Tamils. But the determination of the chronology of the Sangam age on the one hand, and the sifting of the historical data from the vast mass of miscellaneous material on the other, is by no means easy. The origin of the Sangam, the celebrated literary Academy, is itself enshrouded in mystery.

THE S'ANGAM

The earliest account of the S'aṅgam appears in the Commentary on the *Iṛaiyanār Ahapporuḷ* (Grammar of Tamil Poetry)[1] which is not assignable to a date earlier

[1] See Dr. S. K. Aiyangar: *Beginnings of South Indian History* (1918) pp. 249-56 for an account of the legend and P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar: *History of the Tamils* (1929), pp. 226-30 for a critical examination of the legend.

than 8th century A.D. Moreover, it is coloured by the belief in the supernatural agency. It speaks of three successive S'angams which lasted altogether for 9,990 years and had in the aggregate 8,598 poets, who included certain gods as well! On the face of it this account is incredible.

Nevertheless, the entire tradition concerning the Academy does not seem to have been a fiction, for in the first place, traditions do not arise normally without any basis. Secondly, certain kings and poets figure in more than one classic of the S'angam age. Apparently, fact and fiction seem to have become mixed up in the account recorded in the Commentary on the *Iṛaiyanār Ahapporuḷ*. While it is quite probable that an academy of poets flourished under the patronage of the Pāṇḍyan kings, as mentioned in the *Vēlvikkudi grant*,[2] many of the details concerning the S'angam are clearly figments of the myth-maker's imagination.

It is not possible to determine whether there existed three S'angams or only one. The legend that the Pāṇḍyan kings changed their capitals twice before they settled in the present Madurai, is supported partly by the reference in the Mahābhārata and by the evidence of Pliny.[3] The fact of the three capitals was perhaps responsible for the legend of the three S'angams. Tradition is, however, persistent that the two earlier S'angams had produced numerous literary works, most of which have perished and that the extant classics are mainly the products of the third S'angam. It must be admitted that it is impossible to arrive at a finality in respect of this question.

CHRONOLOGICAL BASIS : Nor do the extant S'angam works provide a firm chronological foothold for the history

2 Madras Epigraphist's Report for 1908, pp. 50 ff. That there flourished a S'angam is evident from the statement alleged to have been made by Nedunjelian, the victor of the battle of Talayālanganam, that if he were to be defeated, the extent of his kingdom should not be sung by poets of world-wide renown, the chief of whom was Māngudi Marudan of great eminence (*Puram*, 72).

3 *Mahabharata*, Par IX, 36. See also E. H. Warmington: *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*, (1928) p. 167.

of the early Tamils. The determination of the age of the S'aṅgam has proved a vexed problem, for speculation on it has ranged from 500 B.C. to A.D. 500 not to speak of the extreme views on its upper and lower limits.[4] Doubtless, the Academy flourished prior to the 7th century A.D. because of the S'aiva hymnists, Sambandar and Appar, who were the contemporaries of Pallava Narasimhavarmaṇ I of 7th century A.D. refer to the S'aṅgam.[5] Besides it is obvious that several centuries must have intervened before the rather archaic style of the S'aṅgam works attained the simple pattern of the devotional hymns of the 7th century A.D. Then again, it is unlikely that between the 4th and 6th centuries A.D., when Tamilaham was under the chaos caused by the Kaḷabhra eruption, the S'aṅgam would have flourished under the patronage of the Pāṇḍyan kings.

In fact, the generally accepted view which assigns the S'aṅgam to the early centuries of the Christian era seems to be based on valid grounds.[6] Besides the *Gajabāhu Seṅguttuvan* synchronism, the so-called sheet-anchor of South Indian history, which ascribes the events embodied in the *S'ilappadikāram* to the 2nd century A.D., the remarkable coincidence of the Tamil literary references with the data furnished by the Greek geographers of the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D., reinforced by the discovery of the Roman coins of that period in South India lends support to this view. However, this conclusion has recently been challenged on the ground that the South Indian Brāhmī inscriptions of the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C., reveal Tamil of a crude form and that the well-developed language of the S'aṅgam classics could not have appeared prior to

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4 See V. R. R. Dikshitar: *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, (1936) pp. 20-21 and K. G. Sesha Aiyar: *Cera kings of the Sangam period* (1937) pp. 97-122 for an enumeration of the different theories.

5 *Tiruttevar Tevaram*, II, 10 and *Tirupputtur Tiruttagam*, II, 1.2.

6 K. A. Nilakanta Sastri: *A History of South India*, (1955) pp. 112-13. While it is likely that the term Sangam was derived from the Jains or Buddhists, P. T. S. Iyengar's suggestion that the Tamil Sangam was established on the model of Vajra Nandi's Jain Sangha of A.D. 470 at Madurai, seems to be little more than a piece of guess work. (Op. cit. p.247).

A.D. 500.[7] But this challenge is based on a doubtful hypothesis. The language of these inscriptions represents a hybrid of Prākṛit and Tamil and not the real Tamil of the age.[8]

The extant S'aṅgam literature comprises the eight anthologies called *Eṭṭuttogai* of short lyrics and the Ten Idylls known as *Pattuppāṭṭu.*[9] These poems are broadly classifiable into two groups, viz., those called '*Puṛam*' works which deal with external matters like war and patronage of king and 'Aham' works which concern themselves with love.[10] The anthologies and Idylls were no doubt compiled several centuries after the S'aṅgam age. Further, all the works in each of these categories were not composed at the same time either. Even verses in the *Puṛanānūru* belong to different periods of time within the S'aṅgam age. *Kalittogai* and *Paripāḍal* seem to be later than *Ahanānūṛu,* while *Tirumurugāṟṟuppaḍai* among the Ten Idylls was unquestionably a late composition, posterior to the 3rd century A.D.

According to tradition the *Eighteen Minor works* called *Patineṇkīḻkanakku*, as well as the two great epics, *Maṇimēkhalai* and *S'ilappadikāram*, are classed among the S'aṅgam classics. But the language as well as the ideas contained in most of them indicate a later date for them. However, all the '18 didactic poems', as they are described, do not belong to the same time, though they were grouped together because of the 'veṇbā' metre in which all these

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7 Dr. N. P. Chakravarti: Presidential address to the 17th session of the Indian History Congress, December, 1954.

8 K. K. Pillay: 'The South Indian Brahmi Inscriptions and the Sangam Age', *Tamil Culture*, April, 1956.

9 See V. R. R. Dikshitar: op. cit. pp. 24-45 for a brief account of the extant works of the Sangam literature.

10 Among the *Ettuttogai* anthologies, *Purananuru*, and *Padirruppattu* deal with Puram, and *Narrinai, Kurundogai, Aingurunuru, Kalittogai* and *Ahananuru* with Aham, while *Paripadal* partakes of the characteristics of both. Among the Ten Idylls, *Porunararruppadai, Sirupanarruppadai, Perumpanarruppadai, Tirumurugarruppadai*, and *Malaipadukadam* are laudatory poems on patrons, and *Mullaippattu, Nedunalvadai, Kurinjippattu* and *Pattinappalai* are love poems, while *Maduraikkanchi* is a benedictory poem.

poems were composed. Tradition which assigns the celebrated *Kuṛaḷ* to the S'aṅgam age might well be true to fact.[11] That *Kuṛaḷ* speaks of love marriages typical of the S'aṅgam age as contrasted with those of the *S'ilappadikāram* epoch is a pointer in this direction. *Kuṛaḷ* (verse 475) mentions the example of the cart loaded with the feathers of peacocks ; it is suggestive of the cart loads of feathers sent abroad during the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. Again, *Kaḷavali*, another of the 18 minor works, was not far removed from the date of one verse in *Puṛanānūru* (v. 74). But *Tirukaḍugam* and *S'irupañcamūlam* are the latest in the series and were composed in the 9th century A.D. The references to *Peru Muttaraiyar* in *Nāladiyār* indicate contemporaniety of the work with these chieftains of the 9th century.

The twin epics are anterior to many of the 18 didactic works, although the tradition which assigns them to the S'aṅgam age seems unacceptable. The themes of the epics belong in all probability to the 2nd century A.D. The political background of the stories, and in particular the *Gajabāhu Seṅguṭṭuvan* synchronism, indicate this. The supernatural element in the epics apart, the principal events mentioned in *S'ilappadikāram* could well have occurred in the 2nd century A.D. The omission of the Pallavas in the political picture confirms it. Some time after popular imagination had spun stories out of the events, talented poets would have shaped them into epic form. Besides the larger proportion of Sanskrit words than in the early Tamil literature, the improved forms of the language, the appearance of the northern pattern of marriage ceremonies and the prominent role assigned to the festival of Indra in *S'ilappadikāram*, all indicate a later date for the epics than for the

11 Contra, K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, op. cit. p. 350. The reference to the author of *Kural* as the true poet (Poyyil pulavan) in *Manimekhalai* (Canto 22, 11.60-1) suggests an established reputation and an early date for him. Besides, the extant *Tiruvalluvamalai*, an anthology of panegyric verses sung by the Sangam poets, proves the early appreciation of his splendid work.

S'aṅgam works.[12] It is interesting to find that a recent writer proceeding on astronomical data furnished by *S'ilappadikāram* and its famous commentator, *Aḍiyārku-nallār,* suggests A.D. 465 as the date for the composition of the epic.[13]

Maṇimēkhalai is totally Buddhist in its setting and though it is not indisputably established that Dinnāga's *Nyāyapravēsa* had influenced the epic, the Buddhistic philosophy of the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. is clearly discernible in it.[14] *Maṇimēkhalai* reveals that Kāñci had become a centre of Buddhist learning. It may be recalled that Buddhist and Jain devotees had found their way into South India as early as the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. On the whole there is little justification for assigning the epics to a period later than the 5th century A.D. ; in all probability they belong to the 4th or 5th century A.D.[15]

HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE LITERATURE

Against the chronological background outlined above, the historical value of the different classes of early Tamil literature may be assessed. Among the S'aṅgam classics, *Puṟanāṉūṟu, Pattuppāṭṭu* and *Padiṟṟuppattu* are the most important works for the reconstruction of the people's history. Though the *Aham* poems which deal with love,

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12 *Indra Vila* (festival) is hardly mentioned in the Sangam classics. A faint reference to the temple of Indra occurs in *Puram* (241). On the other hand, by the age of the epics the Indra festival had become so important that Puhar is stated to have been destroyed by Heavenly wrath caused by the failure to celebrate it regularly.

13 M. Rajarao: 'The chronology of events in the *Silappadikaram*' *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*—Culture and Heritage Number, 1956.

14 See S. Kuppuswami Sastri: *Journal of Oriental Research*, Madras. Vol. I, pp. 191-291. Contra Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar: *Manimekhalai in its Historical Setting*, (1928) pp. xxiv ff. Dr. Aiyangar thinks that the views of Dinnaga must have been independently anticipated by the author of *Manimekhalai* which might have been composed a century earlier than Dinnaga, whose date, it may be added, is still a matter of speculation

15 Paranar, a Sangam poet has sung on Seran Senguttuvan who figures also in *Silappadikaram*. Either Senguttuvan of Paranar was a different king, or more probably Paranar was a contemporary poet of Senguttuvan, while the author of the *Silappadikaram* was of a later period.

occasionally advert to historical events and social customs, they are not as full and vivid in these respects as the *Puṛam* works in general.

The short lyrics of *Eṭṭuttogai* furnish a clue to the date, authorship of the poems and the occasion for their composition by means of a colophon appended to each poem. The Idylls also provide similar epilogues, padigams, as they are called, but generally they are far too brief and little more than the authors' names are available from them. Among the *Eṭṭuttogai* collections themselves the historical value of the colophons is not uniformly of the same character. The padigams of the *Padiṛṛuppattu* appear to have been appended long after the poems were composed, for they mention important facts which are not found in the poems. For instance, S'eṅguṭṭvan's northern expedition, the most important achievement ascribed to him by *S'ilappadikāram*, is found mentioned in the padigam of the 5th Decad and not in the poem itself.

Far different is the case of the colophons in *Puṛanānūṛu,* since they seem to have appeared contemporaneously with the poems themselves.[16] Besides, there is no valid reason for disputing the claim registered in the colophons of *Puṛanānūṛu* that the poems were contemporary compositions dealing with particular situations to which the poets themselves were eye witnesses. If this claim is true, the historical value of the work is great.

A remarkable feature about the *Puṛam* poems is that they deal with the situations in an objective and realistic manner. There is little of the conventional pattern either in their themes or in their treatment of the subject as we find in later poems. It is important to observe that the S'aṅgam poets were not petty minded supplicants who praised their patrons indiscriminately. There are a number of courageous outbursts of poets expressing their con-

16 Madras Epigraphist's Report, 1907, p. 52 and K. A. N. Sastri: *Studies in Cola History and Administration,* pp. 14-18.

tempt of those rulers who failed to treat them in the befitting manner.[17] Thus the poets maintained their self-respect, despite their poverty. Their poems were generally true to their convictions, though extravagant praises of generous patrons have occasionally found their way into the poems.

A principal drawback of the data provided by the S'angam works is that a continuous political history of the dynasties of the age cannot be reconstructed, for it is difficult to determine the genealogy or chronological relationship of the kings who figure in the classics. The Pāṇḍya, Cōḷa and Cēra dynasties dominate Tamiḻakam in their respective divisions, while in between their territories, there ruled several minor chieftains. But the achievements of prominent rulers and incidentally the character of monarchy are about the only data of political history which can be gathered from the poems.

THE PANDYAS : References to several Pāṇḍyan kings are found in the S'aṅgam poems. *Maduraikkāñci,* for instance, speaks of two kings, *Nediyōn*[18] and *Palyāgasalai Mudukudumi,*[19] but unquestionably the hero of the poem is *Neḍuñjeḻiyan* who won the famous victory at *Talayālaṅgānam* against a combination of the contemporary *Cēra* and *Cōla* kings and five minor chiefs. Unfortunately it is not possible to determine the distance of time which intervened between this *Neḍuñjeḻiyan* and the king of the same name *Āryappaḍaikadanda Neḍuñjeḻiyan*, figuring in *S'ilappadikāram.*

The victor of *Talayālaṅgānam* is praised also in numerous poems in *Puṛanānūru,*[20] *Ahanānūṛu,*[21] *Kuṛuntogai*[22] and

[17] As examples of poets who boldly remonstrated against ill-treatment may be mentioned *Perundalai Sattanar* (Puram 151, 165, 205) ; *Peruncittiranar* (Puram 207 and 208) and *Auvaiyar* (Puram 206).

[18] *Maduraikkanci,* 1. 61. He has been identified with Vadimbalamba Ninravan by the annotator, Naccinarkiniyar.

[19] *Ibid,* 1. 759.

[20] *Purananuru,* briefly called *Puram,* verses 18, 19, 23-6, 76-9, 371-2.

[21] *Ahananuru,* briefly called *Aham,* verses 36, 116, 175, 253, 266 and 238.

[22] *Kuruntogai,* 393.

Naṟṟiṇai.[23] An ambitious warrior, a generous patron of poets, and a staunch Hindu who performed a Vēdic sacrifice, *Neḍuñjeḷiyan* was one of the outstanding Pāṇḍyan kings, celebrated in the S'aṅgam classics.

Among the successors of *Neḍuñjeḷiyan* known to Tamil literature there appears *Ugraperuvaḷuti,* a valiant warrior who subdued his opponent, the chief of *Kanappēr.*[24] A poet of eminence, he himself, is believed to have caused the anthology of *Ahanānūṟu* to be made. Another Pāṇḍyan king, famous in the S'aṅgam literature is the poet king *Bhūtappāṇḍiyan* who captured Ollaiyūr.[25] An able warrior, a generous and affectionate friend as well as a loving husband, he was an enlightened ruler. The names of several other Pāṇḍyan monarchs occur in the classics ; but few details about them are available.

THE COLAS : The data regarding the early Cōḷas do not differ radically in character from those on the Pāṇḍyas. A continuous history of the kings and their rule is not possible to be reconstructed. The schemes of genealogy attempted by V. Kanakasabhai and M. Raghava Aiyangar are not fully supported by the available sources.[26]

As among the Pāṇḍyas, certain Cōḷa kings stand out prominently in the poems. *Karikāla* is clearly the most outstanding personality among all the monarchs of the age. His brilliant victory at Veṇṇi against the Cēra and Pāṇḍya sovereigns[27] as well as his triumph over a confederacy of nine minor chieftains in a battle at *Vākaipparandalai*[28] and finally the havoc caused by his forces in the territories of his enemies[29] are all vividly described. *Kari-*

23 *Narrinai,* 358 and 387.
24 *Puram,* 21 and 367 ; *Aham,* 26 and *Narrinai,* 98.
25 *Puram,* 71, 246, 247 and *Aham,* 26.
26 V. Kanakasabhai Pillai : *Tamils Eighteen hundred years ago,* (1904) p. 76. M. Raghava Iyengar : *Seran Senguttuvan* (Tamil) 2nd edn., 106-7 n. See K. A. Nilakanta Sastri : *The Colas,* (1955), p. 58, n. 60 for the criticism of the genealogies attempted so far.
27 *Puram* 65 ; *Aham* 55, 246.
28 *Aham* 125.
29 *Aham* 141, *Pattinappalai,* 11. 228-82.

kāla's development of irrigation and his promotion of trade and industry in *Kāverippūmpaṭṭinam* receive special treatment in *Paṭṭinappālai.*[30] His exploits are mentioned also in *Puṟanānūṟu, Porunarāṟṟuppa ḍai, Maṇimēkhalai* and *S'ilappadikāram.*[31] Many of his achievements specified in literature are echoed in later inscriptions like the *Malepaḍu Plates, Anbil Plates, Tiruvālaṅgādu Plates, Larger Leyden grant* and the *Kanyākumari inscription.*

It may be observed that many legends have gathered around the personality of *Karikāla* in the post-S'aṅgam period. Later literature, as seen from *Kalingattupparani, Vikramacōḷan Ulā* and *Rājarājacōlan Ulā*, all of the 12th century A.D., present embellished accounts, which are clearly legendary in character. While *Karikāla* of the S'aṅgam works appears a realistic personality, he becomes enveloped in an admixture of legends and facts in later literature.[32]

A Cōḷa king who ruled considerably later than *Karikāla* was *Kōcceṅgaṇṇan*, the *S'aiva* devotee, whose victory at the battle of *Kaḷumalam* against the Cēra ruler *Kaṇaikkal Irumpoṟai* is found described in a rather conventional manner in *Kaḷavaḷi.* The author of *Kaḷavaḷi*, called *Poygaiyār*, a benefactor of the Cēra king, cannot be identified, as has been done, with the celebrated *Vaiṣṇava* saint, Poygai Alvar, since the battle of *Kaḷumalam* is mentioned in *Puṟanānūṟu*,[33] where it is stated that the vanquished Cēra king himself composed that verse.[34]

THE CERAS : The only dynasty about which a fairly consecutive genealogy can be constructed by the aid of the early Tamil literature is that of the Cēras. *Padiṟṟuppattu* (Ten Decads) concern themselves entirely with

30 *Pattinappalai*, 11. 283-4.
31 *Puram* 7, 224 ; *Porunararruppadai* 11. 141-8, 187-8 ; *Manimekhalai*, Canto I. i. 39. *Silappadikaram*, Canto V, 11. 90-104 : Canto VI, 11. 159-60.
32 K. A. Nilakanta Sastri : *Studies in Cola History and Administration*, (1932) pp. 19-38.
33 *Puram*, 74.
34 Incidentally it indicates that *Kalavali* belongs to the Sangam age.

the achievements of the Cēra kings. Of the original collection, unfortunately the first and last Decads have been lost. Each of the remaining Decads deals with the achievement of a particular Cēra monarch. *Padiṟṟuppattu* furnishes a dynastic list of the Cēra kings and the duration of each reign. K. G. Sesha Aiyar has made a commendable attempt at constructing a chronological framework. But he encounters certain difficulties, which he tries to overcome by means of certain hypotheses, some of which are clearly untenable.[35]

A serious obstacle to the framing of a succession list of the kings is that there were two lines of Cēras, one ruling at *Vañci* and the other at *Toṇḍi*, simultaneously for the most part. The exact relationship of the members of the collateral branch with those of the main line is not ascertainable in every case ; nor is the capital of every ruler specifically mentioned. Moreover, the date of the Cēra rule in terms of known chronology is not easily determinable, for *Padiṟṟuppattu* does not provide its account in terms of any era. Sesha Aiyar's basic date, viz., A.D. 125, the opening year of S'eṅguṭṭuvaṉ's reign is based on the Gajabāhu Seṅguṭṭuvaṉ synchronism.

Of the eight Cēra kings whose achievements are described in *Padiṟṟuppattu*, clearly S'eṅguṭṭuvan is the most outstanding personality. The famous poet, *Paranar*, has devoted the 5th Decad to this sovereign, while many of his achievements are echoed in *S'ilappadikāram*. S'eṅguṭṭuvan's northern conquests, his defeat of Nannan, the Velir chieftain, his overthrow of a confederacy of nine Cōḷas at Nerivāyil and his triumph over the *Koṅgar* are all mentioned in the epic.[36] S'eṅguṭṭuvaṉ was a devout Hindu who performed the Vēdic sacrifices and worshipped both *S'iva* and *Viṣṇu*.[37]. S'eṅguṭṭuvan was, in all probability a kinsman of *Karikāla*. From the references to these

[35] K. G. Sesha Aiyar : *'Cera kings of the Sangam Period'*, (1937) pp. 125-9.

[36] Canto XXVIII ll. 114-22.

[37] *Ibid*, Canto XXVI ll. 54-6.

monarchs in *Padiṟṟuppattu* and *S'ilappadikāram* it seems that Karikāla was the maternal great-grand-father of S'eṅguṭṭuvaṉ.

Puṟnānūṟu speaks of nine more Cēra kings besides those mentioned in *Padiṟṟuppattu*. The reason for the omission of these names remains a mystery. Perhaps the 1st and last Decads mention some or all of the rest; or more probably several of the Cēras mentioned in *Puṟanānūṟu* were subordinate chiefs. However, it is significant that a few of the names found in *Puṟanānūṟu* occur in *Ahanānūṟu* as well.[38] Since the padigam of the 2nd Decad states that Udiyam Cēral was the father of Imayavaramban Neḍumcēralātan who is the hero of that Decad, it is likely that Udiyam Cēral was the hero of the first Decad. Thus while the historical data regarding the Cēras is more adequate than in respect of the other two dynasties there remain insoluble problems which make even the history of the Cēras far from complete or satisfactory.

MINOR CHIEFTAINS: Several minor chieftains who ruled in various parts of the Tamil country are mentioned in the classics. The most prominent among them are Āy Aṇḍiran and Pāri, both renowned for heroism and patronage of poets. Though we come across the names of five other chieftains who, along with Aṇḍiran and Pāri, constituted the seven 'Vaḷḷals' (paragons of generosity), it is not possible to construct the genealogical line of these chieftains or determine their relationship with the rulers of the principal dynasties.

Thus, evaluating the literary source for the political history, it is found that though details are known about the achievements of several monarchs in each dynasty, the material is not adequate enough to help a systematic reconstruction of history. The knowledge of the Cēras is more full and continuous than that of the rest, but even here the lacunae are not inconsiderable. Nor can all the

38 See *Puram* 2; *Aham* 65 and 168.

details furnished about the kings be considered historical. While the references to kings are realistic and sober in comparison with the data in later literature, it must be admitted that all poetic accounts have inherent limitations as a source of history. For one thing the focus of attention on the part of the poet would not have been the same as that of a chronicler or historian.[39]

Doubtless the inferences deducible from the literature about the general character of monarchy and the ideals and aspirations which guided the rulers are interesting. Kings were generally war-minded and wars were frequent. Heroism in war was held up as a great virtue. Death in the field of battle, valiantly fighting to the last, was considered a meritorious end for a ruler. The Cēra king Ātan II who was wounded on the back on the battlefield committed suicide on that account. Details concerning the army corps of the early Tamil kings, the different stages of an expedition, the pattern of military training and the ethics of warfare are all available from the early literature.[40]

There was a lofty conception of royal duties. The maintenance of impartial justice, protection of the poor and the helpless, the promotion of the economic well-being of the subjects[41] and the performance of religious rites for the sake of the people's welfare[42] were considered their legitimate duties. The *Kural* provides a systematic exposition of the responsibilities of an ideal king.[43].

It would seem that kings were remarkably enlightened. Invariably all kings were patrons of the learned. Even

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39 K. A. N. Sastri seems to overestimate the value of *Purananuru* when he says: 'The data furnished by these poems for historical reconstructions will not be the less valuable on account of their being drawn from casual literary pieces rather than from chronicles or other works of a professedly historical nature'. *Studies in Cola History and Administration*, p. 1.

40 See V. R. R. Dikshitar: *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, (1936) pp. 229-54.

41 *Puram*, 35. *Padirruppattu*, 13.

42 *Puram*, 26.

43 *Kural*, see for example Nos. 448, 543, 545, 555, 564, 638 and 872.

more interesting is the fact that many kings themselves were poets. Many of the early Pāṇḍyan monarchs and those of some other dynasties too, were gifted poets. The kings were intimately associated with poets, some of whom acted as advisers or messengers of the monarchs. The royal custom of according a warm reception to the wandering minstrels, Pāṇar as they were called, contributed to the lively maintenance of the arts of poetry and dance.

The impression which the poems give is that the monarch was an autocrat. But in reality, with the restraining influence of the poets and ministers and with a growing reverence for custom, the king was an ideal ruler suited to the times. Whether the groups of advisers called 'aimperuṅguḷu' and 'enpērāyam' denoted councils of representatives or merely attendants on the king, there is little doubt that the ruler was guided and influenced by several competent persons.

References to 'manram', 'podiyil' and 'avai' in the classics suggest that there were frequent gatherings of the people. It is not possible to ascertain what role they played in the political life of the land. But it is presumable that they constituted a type of folk gathering where the people indicated their wishes. It cannot but be regretted that the light thrown on the political life of the common people is not adequate.

Social Life: It is concerning social life that an amazing wealth of material is provided by literature. True, the matter is available but indirectly. Incidental to the description of personalities or events there appear details of social habits, customs, religious institutions and practices and developments of arts and education. Normally, the more casual and indirect the data, the more true and faithful is the picture obtained. In comparison with professional history it suffers in one respect; it lacks a sense of proportion. Those details which are of great interest to the historian might or might not receive attention at the hands of the poets.

It is important to remember that for the most part, the S'aṅgam poems were not produced by persons who pursued poetry for its own sake. Many of the poems came from the 'Pāṇar', the professional class of minstrels, who were the roving bards of the time. Some of them were poets of real merit, while others were musicians, who along with their womenfolk went about visiting kings and chieftains, delighting them with their songs and dances. They praised the liberal patrons while they condemned boldly those who were not warm or generous to them.

As a source of social history the early poems have their shortcomings. They do not touch upon all aspects of social life. Nor do they afford a connected picture of the past, throwing light on the changes which occurred from time to time. Historical averaging, which inevitably contains inaccuracies may be the result; it may provide an unreal appearance of flat uniformity and absence of change. In order to avoid this danger, it is necessary to limit our observations to the time indicated by the specific sources of information, except in such cases where there is definite evidence of the continuance of an institution or practice once established. For instance, meat and liquor were quite commonly used in the S'aṅgam age; in the period of the epics they were condemned by moralists. Again, it is doubtful whether all the intricate patterns of dance described in *S'ilappadikāram* were known to the S'aṅgam age.[44]

Here it is not possible to give a full picture of the social habits and customs gleaned from the early Tamil literature. The general character of the data available from the literary works, illustrated by a few examples, is all that can be indicated. Among the S'aṅgam works unquestionably *Puṟanāṉūṟu* and *Pattuppāttu* afford the most abundant data for the social historian, though the other classics, too, are occasionally helpful.

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44 As an example of such unwarranted generalisation see V. R. R. Dikshitar's treatment of Indra's festival. *Op. cit.* pp. 305-07.

The houses of the people in different strata of society, as well as the palaces of kings, are found described.[45] Food and clothing find numerous references.[46] Meat and liquor were commonly used in the S'aṅgam age,[47] but by the time of the epics a tendency to prohibit their use is clearly in evidence.[48] Men and women dressed their hair with oil.[49] *Kuṟinjippāṭṭu* mentions the custom of women arranging their hair in five braids.[50] References to the habit of wearing *sandals* as footwear are found.[51] The habit of eating betel leaves with lime and arecanut, prevalent in the S'aṅgam age, continued in the period of the epics[52] and still later.

Descriptions of the agriculture and trade of the Tamils appear in numberless places in the classics.[53] While the life of the people belonging to the five natural divisions of the land is described in many of the S'aṅgam works, the habits and customs of the *Paradavar*, the fishermen in Neydal, are vividly portrayed in *Maduraikkāñci* and *Paṭṭinappālai.*[54]

Occupation was the basis of division into castes among the early Tamils. But, even as early as the age of *Puṟanāṉūṟu* it is seen that the Āryan four-fold classification had found its way into the Tamil country. The result was that from about the S'aṅgam age onwards there commenced the fusion of the indigenous and imported systems.[55] *Puṟa-*

45 *Puram,* 196 ; *Perumpanarruppadai,* 405 ; *Pattinappalai,* 11. 117-20.
46 *Puram,* 160, 390, 398 ; *Mullaippattu,* 60 ; *Kuruntogai,* 167, 210.
47 *Puram,* 56, 150 ; *Malaipadukadam,* 11. 153, 155, 168, 175-8, etc. *Pattinappalai,* 108.
48 *Silappadikaram,* Canto XXX, 1. 189.
49 *Puram,* 279.
50 *Kurinjipattu,* 1. 139.
51 *Puram,* 257 ; *Perumpanarruppadai,* 69 ; *Maduraikkanci,* 63.
52 *Puram,* 62 ; *Silappadikaram* , Canto XVI, 1. 55 ; *Manimekhalai,* Canto XXVIII, lines 240-3 Contra. K. A. N. Sastri : *A History of South India,* p. 130.
53 *Puram,* 230, 289, 368 ; *Narrinai,* 93 ; *Pattinappalai,* 11. 5-28 ; *Porunararrupadai,* 11. 245-6. P. T. S. Iyengar gives a diffuse description about the foreign trade in his '*History of the Tamils*', Ch. XVIII. The most systematic account is still that of Warmington : 'The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India', pp. 274 ff.
54 *Maduraikkanci,* 11. 139-44 ; *Pattinappalai,* 11. 59-117.
55 *Puram,* 183, *Tolkappiyam, Poruladhikaram,* 20 and 632.

nānūṟu, while mentioning the pre-Āryan castes also refers to the brāhmins and their high social position.[56] By the time of the epics the amalgam of the two systems of caste had taken firm root, and what is more, the multiplication of subcastes had proceeded to an inordinate extent.[57]

Two forms of marriage, (marriage in secrecy and marriage in the open) were in vogue among the Tamils from early times. But beginning perhaps from the S'aṅgam age these undergo a change and by the time of the epics the forms of Āryan marriage, together with fire rites seem to have become established in the Tamil country.[58] But the original customs persisted in certain respects and it is important to observe that some of them were adopted by the brāhmins as well. For example, the ancient usage of the bride-groom tying *tāli* (marriage symbol) around the neck of the bride,[59] as well as *Sati* and the tonsure of widows[60] were continued side by side with the Āryan rituals and ceremonies.

There is little doubt that in the S'aṅgam age woman was held in high esteem ; she was considered the luminary of the home. *Pattuppāṭṭu* reveals that women enjoyed freedom and that they moved about in public without affecting prudery. '*Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaḍai*', in particular throws much light on this question.[61] It describes, for instance, how girls in the *brāhmin* villages sported in ponds, women mingled freely in the village festivals and how rich ladies participated in certain pastimes and amusements of their own. Of course, all through the ages, unstinting devotion to the husband was the high ideal of virtue held up for women. This is admirably emphasised in the celebrated *Kural,* though several earlier works also touch upon it.

56 *Puram*, 34, 122, 166, 224.
57 *Silappadikaram*, Canto V, 11, 24-58.
58 Ibid, Canto I. 11. 45-58. See Tolkappiyam 'Karpiyal' sutra 4 and 'Porul' sutras 104-6 regarding the original two forms of marriage.
59 *Aham*, 7.
60 *Puram*, 246 and 247.
61 *Kural*, see for example, Nos. 51, 55, 56.

Side by side with the high ideals for women who led the household life there existed harlots or public women, who enticed rich young men for the sake of their money. The S'aṅgam works themselves speak of the harlots and the low social position they occupied. It is needless to add that by the time of the epics the institution had taken a firm root in the country.

The amusements and pastimes of the people reveal at once their rustic simplicity and robust outlook on life. While boys and girls had numerous kinds of interesting games,[62] adults enjoyed manly sports and physical contests, besides the training for warfare, which was provided in certain village organisations. Cock-fights and ram-fights were common amusements which attracted vast crowds of enthusiastic spectators. Festivals were common. For example, during summer there appeared the *Kāmavēḷ* festival, in honour of Kāma, the god of Love. By the days of *S'ilappadikāram* the pastimes and festivals had increased in their number and variety.[63] Festivals in honour of gods like *Muruga, Koṟṟavai* and *Viṣṇu*, not to speak of the grand festival of *Indra*, all assume a great importance.

It was a common practice even in the S'aṅgam age for monarchs and the rich to enjoy their leisure by listening to songs and poems of minstrels and poets, while sitting in pavilions in front of their mansions. Minstrels were provided with food and robes as well as presents of gold. Dancers also vied with each other in the display of their arts in these gatherings.[64]

The progress made by the early Tamils in the arts of dancing, music and poetry was remarkable. The ubiquitous *Pāṇar* and *Viraliyar*, the roving bards, played a great part in the development of these arts. Many of the early classics furnish vivid descriptions of these arts as they

62 *Puram*, 85, *Pattinappalai*, 11. 23-6.
63 *Silappadikaram*. Cantos V and VI.
64 *Puram*, 33, mentions in particular the popular dance, *Alliyakkuttu*.

flourished in the country. Tradition has it that several ancient Tamil classics on music have perished. However, there is little doubt that all these fine arts attained a high degree of perfection in the age of the epics. Very graphic descriptions of the patterns of dance, the systematic training provided, the forms of music, vocal and instrumental, the wide variety of instruments are all described in *S'ilappadikāram.*[65] The *Pāṇar* and *Viraḷiyar* do not appear in the epic period as during the S'aṅgam age. Apparently the artists had given up their roving missions and had settled down in towns.

It is also noticeable that by the epoch of *S'ilappadikāram* the fine arts of music and dance[66] became associated with temples besides palaces and village parks. Temples existed no doubt in the S'aṅgam period itself but they became more numerous and popular in the later epoch. The early religious beliefs and observances are found reflected in the classics, including *Tolkāppiyam*, the work on grammar, which tradition places among the earliest productions of the S'aṅgam. There is no invocation in *Tolkāppiyam* to any God as we find in later works. It is clear that the people of the age believed in a Supreme God and in a three-fold Trinity. But it is remarkable that their Trinity was not identical with that of the Āryans. The early Tamils had belief in several minor gods, too. References to *Daivam*, *Dēvar* and *Imaiyar*, all signifying 'god', indicate this and provide testimony to the Āryan influence. *Muruga* and *Koṛṛavai* appear to have been the most prominent deities of the early Tamils. Temples for *Muruga* were erected on top of hills as well as on the river side. The appearance of Āryan ideas, noticeable in *Tolkāppiyam* and *Puṛanānūṛu*, becomes increasingly prominent. In *Tirumurugāṛṛuppadai*, which was chronologically the last of the '*Pattuppāttu*' and which was composed in honour of *Muruga*, the god is identified with *Kārtigēsa*, the Āryan

65 Canto VI.

66 The dance which constituted the worship of *Korravai*, the goddess of victory, is vividly described in *Silappadikaram*, Canto XII.

god of six faces and twelve arms. *Koṛṛavai,* the war-goddess of the Tamils, merges into the Āryan goddess *Durga.* A similar process is noticed in respect of several other deities. But it is still an open question whether the *S'iva* of the Draviḍians was adopted by the Āryans and given a new position in their pantheon. One thing is clear. A fusion, particularly marked in the sphere of religion, was taking place between the Tamilian and Āryan ideas and practices and this fusion became more and more marked as time passed.

When we come to the period of the twin epics, we notice the full-fledged fusion of Āryan and Draviḍian religious practices. In addition to the gods already worshipped by the people there now figured *Balarāma,*[67] *Varuna* and *Indra. Dēvi* was worshipped not only in the form of *Koṛṛavai* but also as *Lakṣmi, Sarasvati* and *Pārvati.*

Thus Tamil literature, which constitutes the only source of information, provides valuable data for the social history of the people. Care has to be taken, however, in utilising them, particularly in relation to chronology. The basic conditions as revealed by the S'angam classics, together with the changes reflected in the 18 minor works and the epics, can be reconstructed with a fair measure of accuracy. It is important in this connection to remember that the literature of a particular period not only portrays contemporary life and events but may also embody in it earlier traditions. And a clear sifting of the one from the other is not always easy. Thus, subject to all these limitations, the social history of the early Tamils is possible to be reconstructed with the help of their literature.

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67 *Silappadikaram*, Canto IX, 1. 10.

"Algummim" or "Almuggim" of the Bible

An Attempt at Identification

P. JOSEPH

King Solomon's famous Ophir expedition, fitted out with the help of King Hiram of Tyre and mentioned in several passages of the Bible[1], according to the general consensus of scholarly opinion, went to a place in western India. Among the various goods that were taken back by the expedition to Judaea was an article, given the curious Hebrew name of " algummim " or " almuggim ". The only thing that we know definitely from the implication of the biblical passages is that by " algummim " or " almuggim " was meant a particular type of tree. Hence various speculations have arisen with regard to its identification and in each case a different derivation has been given to the word in question.

Some have tried to find in algum the sandalwood tree of India. This identification was first hinted at in the last century by the famous Swedish botanist Celsius[2]. He attempted to specify what Kimetu, a biblical writer of the 13th century, meant by his explanation of the algum wood when he called it the Brazil wood, which later on Abul Fazl said was a native of India and Ethiopia[3]. Celsius knew that traditionally an odorous wood was signified by the algum ; he knew too that the odorous wood could not be the frankincense tree for it did not grow very much in India which had tradionally been bestowed the honour of receiving Solomon's expedition. He, therefore, looked for an Indian

1 III *Kings*, IV, 26-28 ; *Ibid.*, X, 11, 22 ; II *Chronicles*, VIII, 17-18 ; *Ibid.*, IX, 10, 21.

2 Celsius, *Hierobotanicon*, I, 176.

3 Keil, *Commentary on the Books of Kings*, I, p. 154.

tree that would best answer the algum and proposed the case of the Santalum album, the genuine Indian sandalwood, that grows in a natural state along the western coast of India.

From the time of Celsius those who have propounded an Indian locale for Ophir have tried to derive algum etymologically from a word of an Indian language meaning sandalwood.

Lassen and MaxMuller[1] derive algum from the Sanscrit *Valguka* which is itself a derivative of *Valg* meaning beauty. *Valguka*, therefore, primarily means beauty and secondarily sandalwood. Those who sponsor the above derivation say that *Valg* has been borrowed by the Tamil language that has added its common termination *um* and got *valgum*. When the Jews took up the word they dropped the initial consonant and thus got *algum* and by metathesis, which is a very common process when words are borrowed from one language into another, they turned it into *almug*. Those who stand for a pure Tamil derivation[2] of the word *algum* have derived it from *alagu* meaning primarily beauty and secondarily sandalwood. According to them the Sanscrit word *valguka* is derived from *alagu*, a purely Tamil word.

Objections have been raised to the above identification. Traditionally the algum wood, although not specified botanically, yet has been interpreted to mean some kind of not merely odorous but also resinous wood. The sandalwood, although odorous is not resinous. Again Celsius seems to have overlooked the uses to which the algum wood has been put by Solomon. The sacred writer says that it was used for staircases with bannisters in the temple and the king's palace, and for musical instruments like guitars

1 Lassen, *Indische Alterthumscunde*, I, pp. 651-652; Max Muller, *Lectures on the Science of Language*, I, p. 234.
2 Caldwell, *A Comparative Grammar of Dravidian Languages*.

and harps for the temple singers[1]. The sandalwood is not generally used for these purposes[2], because it is rather brittle and is not amenable to polish, which would to a great extent be required if a wood is to be put to the uses that have been noted.

Some have propounded the case of *Aquilaria Agallocha,* which is both odorous and resinous[3]. It is a very valuable wood and costlier than even the sandalwood. In addition to the fact that it answers the traditional interpretation of the algum it had the special claim of being imported into Judaea in later times and was the *lignum aloes* of the scriptures.

As for the etymological explanation of algum in this identification there are two slightly different opinions. Some derive it from the Sanscrit *aguru* or *agaru* while others from the Tamil *agil.* The Sanscrit word is said to come from *a* + *guru* ; *a* — privative, and *guru* —heavy. Hence *aguru* would mean a light wood. Another derivation too is given. *Laghu* or *Lauha*, a Sanscrit and Pali synonym meaning light is given as the root of *agaru.* The Tamil word *agil* is derived from *ahk* + *il*, — *ahk* — having a pungent odour from the idea of being close or stuffy[4]. The Tamil derivation seems to be more reasonable in view of the odorous nature of the material. As the tree concerned is an Indian tree, it would easily appear that the Aryans got the word *agaru* from *agil,* when they came to India. The derivatives in the various languages make really an interesting study. Malayalam has *akil* ; Tulu *agel, agela* ; Sinhalese *agil, agamu* ; Pali *agalu* ; Sanscrit *agaru, aguru* ; Hebrew *ahalim* ; Greek *agallochon* ; Portuguese *aguila,* from which the Latin botanical name *aquilaria,* and the English

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1 III *Kings*, X, 11-12 ; Keil, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161 ; Cf. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, VII, 1.

2 Crawford, *A Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands*, p. 310.

3 Cf. Watt, *The Commercial Products of India*, pp. 72-74 ; Gamble, *A Manual of Indian Timbers*, p. 316.

4 Cf. Gnanaprakasar, *An Etymological and Comparative Lexicon of the Tamil Language*, I, Pt. I, s.v. *Akil.*

eagle-wood, (Aquila — eagle in Latin)[1]. It is clear, therefore, that the two parts of the botanical name of this tree, viz. Aquilaria agallocha, are derived from the same root.

The most serious objection to the above identification is that although the *Aquilaria agallocha* might answer the traditional interpretation of algum, i.e., an odorous and resinous wood, yet it could not be put to the uses to which the algum was put by Solomon. The eaglewood is very porous and hence soft because it is very highly resinous. The resin collects itself at the heart of the wood and this portion can be used only for burning and medicinal purposes and not for staircases with bannisters, harps and guitars. The very origin in Sanscrit denotes this nature of the wood, namely its lightness. Yet another reason why the Ophir expedition could not have got this wood is that it grows only in Bhutan, Assam, Eastern Bengal, Burma and Malay Peninsula and Archipelago[2]. It is not found in the western coast of India, where alone we can reasonably suppose Solomon's men to have gone.

Hence another wood will have to be found. This should answer the following conditions: It should be resinous and odorous according to the traditional interpretation, mentioned in the Bible, and should grow on the western coast of India.

A word must be said about the traditional interpretation of the algum wood, for that only can give us a clue to the real nature of the wood that is here intended. The Septuagint version of the Book of Kings (III *Kings*, X, 12) translates algum wood as *Zila* (wood) *peleketa* or *apeleketa.* This gives no information at all as to the nature of the

1 Yule-Burnell, *Hobson Jobson*, s. v. Eagle-wood. This word must not be confused with another namely aloe, wrongly called also eagle-wood. This is a bitter drug and its origin is from the Syriac *elwat*. This confusion introduced by the later Greek writers was taken up by the Portuguese and has persisted till to-day.

2 Watt, *op. cit., loc. cit.*

wood. But the Septuagint version of the Chronicles in the corresponding passage has rendered *algum* as *Zila penkina,* which strictly means fir-wood. The explanation of Josephus, the Jewish historian, is very illuminating and hence can bear quoting. He says, "The wood which was brought to him at this time was larger and finer than any that had ever been brought before ; but let no one imagine that these pine trees were like those which are now so named, and which take their denomination from the merchants, who so call them that they may procure them to be admired by those that purchase them ; for those we speak of were to the sight like the wood of the big tree, but were whiter and more shining. Now we have said this much, that nobody may be ignorant of the difference between these sorts of wood, nor unacquainted with the nature of the genuine pine tree ; and we thought it both a reasonable and humane thing when we mentioned it, and the use the King made of it, to explain this difference so as we have done"[1] The Vulgate translation is *Thyina* (*Thion, Thia*). According to Theophrastus this tree is particularly durable and its timber was used for the roofs of temples. He says again that it is an ever-green like the wild cypress and should be classed with the fir, the pine, the juniper, the yew and the cedar.

The above given Septuagint and Vulgate tradition elucidated by Josephus and Theophrastus shows that the algum is an ever-green belonging to the cedar family, quite big, resinous, hard and durable. Because of its hardness and durability it could be put to the uses to which it was put by Solomon. As Theophrastus himself says, it was made use of for the roofs of the temples. The tree that answers this description best in India is the *Chick-rassia Tabularis.* It is quite big and a very hard wood, capable of high polish and of being tempered in such a way as to

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[1] Josephus, *op. cit., loc. cit.*

well refract sounds to the ear. So it could be turned into staircases with bannisters, guitars and harps. It is also resinous and belongs to the cedar family being known as white cedar, as the traditional interpretation requires. And it is found in southern India along the western coast.

What is more, it bears the Tamil name of *Agil,* and hence algum can be derived from it by making *g* and *l* interchange places. The reason for the name in Tamil can be easily seen from its derivation. *Akh* means to be close together. The pores of a tree being close render the heartwood hard, and that is the case with the tree in question. In Tamil it is also called *madagari-vembu* ; in Telugu too it is known by the same name, while in Kannada it is called *Dal-mara.*

The description of the tree given by Watt answers the requirements so well that a quotation may be excused. "The Chittagong wood or white cedar, *Chikrassi, lal-devdar, saiphra, saipropaon, pabba, aglay, agil, dalmara, yinma,* etc. A beautiful tree met with in the tropical forests from Sikkim to Chittagong and Burma, and from the Konkan and Deccan to Mysore, Malabar and Ceylon.

"It yields a beautiful yellowish-brown richly veined satiny timber, suitable for furniture, piano-cases, tables, etc. Gamble remarks that it deserves to be better known and exported from convenient localities like Chittagong, where it chances to be plentiful. It also yields a transparent yellow gum, an astringent bark (used medicinally), and flowers that afford both a red and yellow dye "[1].

To the above description may be added a few words from Gamble : " A large tree . . . . Heartwood hard, ... with a beautiful satin lustre, seasons and works well "[2].

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1 Watt, *op. cit.*, p. 294.
2 Gamble, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

Kamba Ramayanam

Hiranya-Vadai-Padalam or the Slaying of Hiranya

V. SHANMUGA MUDALIAR

By his penance, rare and hard,
Hiranya, the Asura king,
This immunity got : —
" He will not die—
Either by male or female,
or that which is neither ;
Or by anything in the womb living ;
Or by things or beings,
seen by the eye
or conceived by the mind ;
Nor can his death
on Earth or in the air befall ! St. 14

" He will not die—
Either by any of the gods
or the wandering Yekkas ;
Or by the Murthis
whom all can conceive and contemplate ;
Or by man !
Nor can he, fighting them,
His strength lose ! St. 15

" He will not die—
Either in water or by fire,
storm, or other force on Earth !
And the curses of the discerning gods,
The sages and others,
Him cannot touch,
But on the cursers recoil ! St. 16

" He will not die—
Either indoor or in the open ;
Or by the weapons of the gods ;

Or in the night or in the day !
Nor can Yama, the God of Death,
his death claim !
Oh ! Who's there who can his life take ? St. 17

" He will not die—
Either by anything
The five elements produce
Or the Vedas proclaim !
Or even by his own hand
If self-killing he sought ! "
Such was Hiranya,
The Ruler Of all Universe ! St. 18

To such august ruler
There was a dear son,
Wiser than the wise,
And purer than all those
For purity known ;
Nay, purer than the Vedas even !
One who was a Master,
A Philosopher, unique,
And of Dharma, the Lord !
One who with a mother's love
All living beings loved ! St. 19

Hiranya wishes to put his son to school and for this purpose asks a very learned, wise Brahmin to instruct him in the ' Vedas '.

The Brahmin teacher,
In due solemnity,
His father's name
Bids him invoke !
At this blasphemy
The son with his fingers
Plugs his ears ;
And, instead, utters
" Om Namo Narayana ",
The name of the true God,
The summit of the Vedas ! St. 22 & 23

Trembling the Tutor cries :
" Oh, Miserable sinner !
Thou hast ruined me
And thyself too !
Leaving that name,
The fittest to invoke
Even for the gods,
Why didst thou
The other name utter ?
How did it thy head enter ? " St. 24

" What's wrong ? Tell me ",
Says the boy,
" By uttering the great name
Proclaimed by the hoary Vedas
I have but saved me,
My father and thee,
And all the world too ! " St. 25

The Brahmin replies :
" Thy father is greater
Than the foremost
Among the gods and the Murthis !
And I'm the Brahmin
To chant his holy name
Authorised. Dost thou know
Better than I ?
Ruin me not, I beg thee,
Uttering that other name ? " St. 26

Hearing this the boy says :
" I know no name
Other than that
Of that our being,
The primal Lord of Creation !
To learn else I have no need,
For there's nothing
That my understanding
Hath not me taught ! " St. 27

And he proceeds :
" He who the limit sets
To the Great Entity
The four Vedas proclaim—

He hath my heart
Entered and filled !
Such great possession
There can be none other !
If thou knowest any,
That I do not know,
Teach me, Truth and Justice
Not violating. St. 28

" He whose name the Brahmins
In Vedas versed chant ;
He whose name the Upanishads,
The sages and the gods
Loudly proclaim ;
Is there any name
Other than this
That can be uttered ? St. 29

" He is my Lord,
And the Lord of Brahma,
And of the highest of all,
And of all other objects,
Moving and standing,
In creation !
Than this to thee also
There's nothing
That's of greater good ! " St. 33

The Brahmin is dumb-founded. He goes and tells Hiranya of all that has happened. Hiranya asks him what is that forbidden name which his son dared to utter. The Brahmin is scared out of his wits and exclaims :

" Sire, were I to utter
That sinful name,
I would to hell go,
And my tongue, burnt,
Would fall out ! " St. 37

Hiranya sends his men to fetch his son. When he comes, he asks him to tell him the word by uttering which he gave such offence to the teacher. Prahalada, the son, replies :—

" He who all one's desires grants ;
He who the liberated leads to Heaven ;
He who accepts the sacrifices
At the red-flamed fire offered ;
It is that great one's name
That I uttered. It is,
'OM NAMO NARAYANA.' " St. 42

Hiranya thunders at him :

" There's my sovereign decree
That from that day till I live
The mouth that utters
And the mind that dwells
On that name, will be burnt !
Who told thee this name ?
And from whom didst thou learn it ?
Tell me quickly." St. 47

" The sages, gods and others
That the three worlds inhabit—
All these my feet contemplate,
And my name praise and chant !
They dare not teach thee this.
From whom, then, didst thou learn it ? St. 48

" The elders and others of our clan,
Countless far than the sands of the sea,
By his killing their number hath dwindled.
Doth thy wisdom tell thee, boy,
That by invoking the serpent's name
The rat will great good attain ? St. 50

" Assuming the guise of the Boar,
With his tusk he killed my brother—
A hero of such wondrous might
That the fourteen worlds
He could in his belly keep !
Is it for chanting the killer's name
That I thee begat ? St. 51

" Oh, foolish boy !
Dost thou not know
The Vedic truth is
None other than this :

That it is by doing
And not by reasoning
That one becomes supreme—
The Lord of all
And of everything
And of the Universe,
Worthy to perform the three-fold function
Of creating, sustaining and destroying ? St. 52

" In this great world
There's nothing of beginning
And end but this :
Those that good deeds do
Will become great,
And those that evil do
Will low become !
That's the Law the Vedas teach ! St. 53

" By their great penance
Brahma, Vishnu and Siva
Had their position attained ;
But this they have now lost ;
And I have by penance
The rulership of the world
Assumed ! Who can dare
Enter my domain and say
That my rule decline will suffer ? St. 54

" Foolish child !
Thy error I forgive thee.
But cease talking
Such things again ;
Else I will be angry.
Now go, and whatever
Thou art taught,
Taking it as good,
Learn." St. 56

Thus admonished Prahalada addresses his father solemnly thus :

" He that hath in his mind
All the worlds conceived ;
He in whom the worlds exist ;

He that indwells in the worlds ;
He that hath none before
Nor none after him ;
He that is supreme ;
He that is changeless ;—
Oh ! Who can His ancient state know ? St. 59

" As the three worlds ;
As the three qualities ;
As anything and everything ;—
Of such infinite variety
Is His being !
Can even the sages and gods
His doings understand ? St. 62

" Can an action
Its result escape ?
Having created the two Karmas—
The good and the bad—
They the intended results,
And none other, show !
Of His grace and mercy
What better evidence is needed ? St. 67

" He's greater than the Earth,
The Air and the other three elements ;
He is beyond Thought and Count !
And from the naked eye
He is hidden !
But if sought truthfully
And with all one's feeling
Himself He will reveal ! St. 71

" Of Desire, Anger and other passions,
Hard and evil, He rids us ;
And His name all mishap averts
Even as it great good brings !
Oh ! How can others
Of His Grace speak ? St. 73

" He is Time, Cause and Place ;
He is the result that from action flows ;
He is the agent who the results implements ;
He is Virtue and the great good it brings ;
He is the seed and the big tree out of it comes ! St. 74

" Such is the Great One
Whose name I invoked !
And I but did so
Lest thy great wealth and fame,
Won thro' much self-abasement,
And thy life, thou lose ! " St. 78

Hiranya is in a mighty rage, and says :

" Other enemy I need none,
Thanks to my Fate !
He that hath out of my blood come,
Loving allegiance to my limitless enemy
Hath not hinted, but sweareth !
Kill me this miscreant,"
And those in killing Yama excel,
Catch and bind Prahalada ! St. 80

The executioners ply their swords on his body but Prahalada, fixing his mind on the Lord and chanting his holy name, goes unhurt. The executioners go and report this extraordinary phenomenon to Hiranya, who then orders that he be burnt alive. A huge fire fed by huge pails of oil is made, and Prahalada is thrust into it. Here again, invoking the Lord's name, Prahalada does not feel the effects of fire and is untouched. He is next ordered to be thrown into a snake pit—to be bitten by the eight deadly serpents of the world. They come, hiss and bite, but he is unhurt. Next he is taken to a mad elephant, to be trampled and killed by it. Prahalada remains as before serenely calm, invoking the Lord's name thus :—

" When of old the Elephant,
In dread of the crocodle killing him,
Cried out to ' Audhi Mulam '—
The origin and source of all—
He who both a father and mother is,
To his rescue came !
The same doth in my mind dwell ! " St. 93

Hardly has this been uttered, before the elephant bows before Prahalada and departs peacefully. This exasperates Hiranya who orders the erring elephant to be killed. It is

chased and harried by a host of hunters, but it turns against them, killing several and wounding many others. Foiled in this, Hiranya finally orders that Prahalada be thrown into the deep sea securely tied to a heavy stone, but he is not drowned. Prahalada is taken to Hiranya, whom he addresses thus :—

" Father ! My life to take
If thou thinkest,
Know it isn't possible.
My life only He can take,
Who all the world
Hath created ! " St. 118

Hiranya bursts out :
" Who is it, boy,
That this world gave ?
If it isn't the three Murthis
Who chanting my name live,
Or the sages, or the wholly beaten gods,
Who is it, tell me ? " St. 119

To which Prahalada replies :

" My Lord, the Supreme God,
If thou canst see with my eyes
Thou wilt see Him everywhere !
But thou dost not feel
That to banish love from thy heart
Is deadly sin. Is it easy, then,
With thy eyes to see Him ? St. 120

" Three are His qualities ;
Three His action and form ;
Three are His eyes
And the flame of His spirit ;
And three are His worlds !
And He is the witness
Of all existence,
At the beginning, middle and end !
This the conclusion
The Vedas arrive,
And it is the Truth " St. 122

Hearing this Hiranya bursts into a loud laugh, exposing his huge teeth, and says :—

" Thou sayest
Thy supreme one
In all things indwells.
I'll with him deal
When I see him.
Doth He, this thief,
In this pillar dwell ?
If so prove it."

" Yes, Father," saye he,
" He is in the span,
Nay, in the hundredth part
Of the atom too !
He is in the high Meru
And He is in this pillar here !
Yea, in the word just uttered
He is there too !
His universal presence
Thou wilt presently see ! " St. 124

Hiranya cries out, in a rage ;

" Him whom the gods
And thou see spread
All over the world,
In this pillar show !
If thou showest him not,
Like the lion killing the elephant,
I'll kill thee, and drinking
Thy red blood, thy flesh
I'll eat too ! " St. 125

To which Prahalada replies :

" My life it isn't easy
For thee to kill.
But if the One
I've spoken of
Doth not appear
At any and every spot
Thou touchest, my life
I'll myself take !
To wish to live after that
Would be to own myself
As no loving servant of His ! " St. 126

Hiranya, his anger mounting,
Exclaims laughing :

"This is good, very good ! "
And raising his mighty arm,
For victory famed,
At the pillar smote he !
And lo ! at that very moment,
Tearing open the Universe,
Wildly laughed the Red-eyed Lion ! St. 127

When the wise Prahalada—
He who of God's existence
Proof promised—
When he saw Him,
Whom even the Brahma,
Daily searching,
Could not see,
He danced, he wept,
He sang and cried aloud,
And raising his hands o'er his head,
He prayed, and in his ecstacy
He jumped and stamped all over the Universe !
St. 128

Hiranya addresses the Lion :

"Thou who art laughing !
Who art thou ?
Art thou the Hari
This boy hath mentioned ?
Was not the sea
Thou hadst cunningly entered
Sufficient that this tall pillar
Thou shouldst seek ?
Fight if thou wouldst ;
I'm ready, come ;
Come soon ! " St. 129

The pillar burst,
And out came the Lion !
And his size grew and grew
Until the eight corners
And all the rest of the Universe
He measured!

Oh! Who can know and describe
What afterwards he did?
The Universe was torn,
At top and bottom, both! St. 130

The Lion, in his fierce mood, kills all the Asuras, and finally stands ready to fight Hiranya. The latter drawing his sword is poised for attack. Seeing this Prahalada approaches his father and says:—

"Thou hast seen
All that hath happened.
Yet in thy heart
Thou feelest nothing!
Go and worship
The mighty Lord of the Sea!
Thy evil deeds
He will forgive!" St. 145

To which Hiranya replies:

"Hear me", says he, with bitter laugh,
"Cutting off the Lion's arms and feet
In thy presence and then
Cutting thee to pieces,
I'll my sword worship!
Can other worship be
For such as me
Even when on pacifying
Our sweethearts
We are bent?" St. 146

Then ensues a terrific fight which lasts until dusk. Then,

At dusk,
At the door of the golden palace,
Holding Hiranya firm on his thighs,
The great Vishnu in Lion's guise,
With his sharp claws,
His iron heart ripped open!
And rid the gods of their misery! St. 153

Then Prahalada burst into a paean of praise for the Lord Supreme thus :—

" That Thou hast
Thyself created
The great Avatar
Thou hast now taken
Doth proudly show !
Altho' thou art
Thy own creator,
Doth it disprove
That Thou— the Giver of Life—
Hast me created ? St. 157

" Oh Lord, My Father !
In Thee
Thou hast me installed.
Without Thee,
All things and beings
I've in me created !
I've none before
Nor none after me !
I'm like the gold vessel
That hath out of gold come ! ! St. 160

The Lion-God, greatly pleased, suppressing his anger, bids the gods not to be afraid. They invoke the Goddess Lakshmi, who comes to the Lord. All is now peace and grace, and the Lord, turning to Prahalada, says :

" Thy race we will
Nevermore kill,
Even tho' boundless wrongs
They do !
I'm thy friend !
If there's anything
Thou wishest me to do,
Without reserve ask." St. 168

To which Prahalada replies :

" Endless are the boons
I've already got !
Can there be any
I may hereafter get ?

But if more I'm to receive,
This great boon let me have :
'Even were I, My Lord,
To be a humble worm
Without backbone born,
Thy love let me have for ever !'" St. 169

The Lord is immensely pleased, and blesses Prahalada thus :

"Even if the Elements,
The first in Creation,
Were to die,
Thou wilt never !
And like Me
Thou wilt ever be ! St. 170

* * * *

"The benefits the world reaps
Worshipping and praising Me,
Let it all these have
Worshipping and praising thee ! St. 171

* * * *

"Dharma, good and pure,
Truth and the Vedas four ;
Compassion and Grace ;
Wisdom boundless ;
Wealth of all kinds ;
The ancient god of the eight-fold quality ;
Let all these
Thy command await !
And as my own Self,
May thou grow
Into a shining image
Of the Almighty !" St. 173

News and Notes

LONDON TAMIL SANGHAM

Dr. Sekhar elected President

London, April 18.

The London Tamil Sangam this week elected Dr. B. C. Sekhar, who has been resident here for several years, as its president.

It also elected office-bearers and an Executive Committee on which are members from Ceylon, Nyasaland, South Africa, Burma and India. Mrs. Gnanam Swaminathan, wife of Mr. T. Swaminathan, Minister at the Indian High Commission, was elected Vice-President.

The report of the Secretary, presented at the annual meeting, said that notwithstanding difficulties, the Sangam was fairly active in 1956 in organising almost every month " social and cultural functions ".

Building fund

The report referred to a proposal that the Sangham should have its own building in London. Certain donations had been paid for the building fund, and the report said : " It is up to the new Executive Committee to carry out this long-felt desire of the Sangham."

The report urged that it was necessary to enlarge the membership of the Sangham.

Following the annual meeting, the Sangham celebrated Tamil New Year Day with a feast, and a programme of

music, bharata natyam by Mrs. Leila Raman, and the presentation of a Tamil play by members from Ceylon.

The London Tamil Sangham was formed in 1954.

—*The Mail,* April 18, 1957.

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

A SPECIAL CHAIR IN TAMIL INSTITUTED

EXPERT COMMITTEE TO ADVISE NEW DEPARTMENT

Annamalainagar, April 8.

The Annamalai University has instituted a special Chair in Tamil. Important schemes relating to Tamil language, literature and generally Tamil culture in all its aspects are to be worked out.

The immediate programme now undertaken includes research in comparative philology, and preparation of an etymological dictionary and an English-Tamil dictionary.

The Syndicate of the University has appointed a committee of distinguished experts in linguistics and philology to advise, guide and direct the work in this new department, with Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Chairman, West Bengal Legislative Council and Professor Emeritus of Comparative Philology in the University of Calcutta, as its Chairman.

MEMBERS

The members of the committee are Dr. S. M. Katre, Director, Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute, Poona ; Mr. A. Subbiah Pillai, Vice-President, Academy of Tamil Culture, Nungambakkam; Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, Professor of Tamil, Madras University ; Mr. L. P. Kr. Ramanathan Chettiar, Professor of Tamil (Oriental), Annamalai University ; Dr. A. Chidambaranatha Chettiar, Professor of Tamil (Arts), Annamalai University ; Mr. G. Subramania Pillai, Professor of Tamil Research, Annamalai University ; Mr. T. P. Meenakshisundaram

Pillai, Chief Professor of Tamil, Presidency College, Madras; Mr. T. N. Srikantiah, Professor of Kannada, Karnataka University, Dharwar; Mr. Korada Ramakrishna Aiyah, Madras; Mr. M. P. Narayana Menon, Retired Chief Inspector of Certified Schools, Madras; Dr. M. Varadarajan, Professor of Tamil, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras; Dr. M. Rajamanikkam Pillai, Professor of Tamil, Thiagarajar College, Madurai; and Mr. P. Thirugnanasambandam, Professor of Sanskrit, Presidency College, Madras.

Mr. G. Devaneya Pavanar, Reader in Comparative Philology will be Secretary of this Committee.

PROGRAMME TO BE DRAWN UP

The inaugural meeting of the committee is to be held today at Annamalai University. The committee is expected to continue its sittings on April 9 and 10 also. Several distinguished scholars in Tamil and in other Dravidian and classical languages have been invited from Madras and other States to attend the meeting.

The committee, guided as it is by an outstanding authority on philology in the country and composed of distinguished experts in linguistics and scholars in Tamil and other languages of the Dravidian family and Sanskrit, is expected to consider important problems of philology and linguistics, and draw up a programme of work which may be pursued in the Department of Philology of Annamalai University.

—*The Mail*, April 8, 1957.

TOUR OF TAMIL DRAMATIC TEAM IN MALAYA

Madras, April 7.

Mr. T. K. Shanmugham and the members of his troupe who are shortly leaving for Malaya to stage a series of dramas were entertained at a party last evening at Woodlands Hotel, Mylapore, by the members of the South Indian

Artistes' Sangam and Nataka Kazhagam and Nageswaram Vidwans' Association.

Mr. K. Subramanyam, President of the Nagaswara Vidwans' Association and Mr. N. S. Krishnan, President of the South Indian Artistes' Sangam and Nataka Kazhagam, referred to the services rendered by Mr. Shanmugham in the cause of Tamil drama and wished him success in his tour of Malaya.

Mr. S. A. Ayyaswami Chetti, Chief Presidency Magistrate, Egmore, said Mr. Shanmugham and his brother were the ambassadors of Tamil drama and culture.

Mr. C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, who presided, said the glory of reviving Tamil drama to its high position was largely due to Mr. Shanmugham's untiring and devoted work. Dramas should always be of high order, capable of spreading lofty ideals among the people. He was sure the people and the Government in this part of the country would give encouragement to good dramas.

Messrs. P. Ramamurthy and Natesan then spoke. Mr. Shanmugham replied suitably. Mr. Krishnan proposed a vote of thanks.

—*The Hindu*, April 7, 1957.

Penang, April 20.

The members of the T.K.S. Brothers dramatic troupe were warmly received by several hundred fans to-day as they arrived in Penang on the " State of Madras ".

The boat had scarcely berthed alongside Swettenham pier, when autograph hunters rushed for the gangway. As they came down representatives from Penang Indian clubs and associations were among the big crowd which waited at the pier.

—*The Hindu*, April 22, 1957.

Transliteration of Tamil Phonemes* into English

VOWELS

அ	—	a	(as in among)
ஆ	—	a:	(„ calm)
இ	—	i	(„ sit)
ஈ	—	i:	(„ machine)
உ	—	u	(„ full)
ஊ	—	u:	(„ rule)
எ	—	e	(„ fed)
ஏ	—	e:	(„ able)
ஐ	—	ai	(„ aisle)
ஒ	—	o	(„ opinion)
ஓ	—	o:	(„ opium)
ஔ	—	au	(„ now)

CONSONANTS

				Hints re: articulation
Hard[1] (Plosive)	க	—	k	(as in **king**, angle, alhambra)
	ச	—	c	(„ **church**, angel, calcium)
	ட	—	t:	(„ card ?)....Retroflex - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
	த	—	th	(„ threat, **this**, **thick**)....dental.
	ப	—	p	(„ **pipe**, amber)
	ற	—	t	(„ atlas, sun**day**, arrears)..Retroflex-articulate with **tip** of tongue.
Soft (Nasal)	ங	—	ng	(„ **sing**)....velar n
	ஞ	—	nj	(„ angel)....palatal n
	ண	—	n:	(„ **urn**?)....Retroflex n - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
	ந	—	nh	(„ anthem)....dental n
	ம	—	m	(„ **mate**)
	ன	—	n	(„ enter)....Retroflex n - articulate with **tip** of tongue.
Medium (non-nasal continuant)	ய	—	y	(„ yard)
	ர	—	r	(„ **red**)
	ல	—	l	(„ leave)....Alveolar l - articulate with **tip** of tongue.
	வ	—	v	(„ very)
	ழ	—	l-	(„ ?)....Retroflex l - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
	ள	—	l:	(„ **hurl**)....Alveolar l - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
Auxiliary[2] (ஆய்தம்)	ஃ	—	x	(„ **ahead**)

* The Tamil phonemes may for practical purposes be treated as having single allophones only, except in the case of the hard consonants which have four allophones each, as shown in note 1 on the reverse.

1, The Phonemes, classified as *hard,* have normally an *unaspirated unvoiced* value but acquire the following modified values if preceded by a consonant:—

(a) a *slightly aspirated* unvoiced value, if preceded by a *plosive or hard consonant.*

e.g., பக்கம் - is pronounced pakkham, not pakkam

(b) an unaspirated but *voiced* value, if preceded by a *nasal or soft consonant*:—

e.g., பங்கம் - is pronounced pangam, not pankam
பஞ்சம் - „ panjam, not pancam,

(c) a *fricative* value if preceded by a *non-nasal continuant or medium consonant or by the auxiliary consonant.*

e.g., பல்கலை becomes palhalai not palkalai
எஃகு „ ehhu not exku

NOTE.—In most present day dialects, the plosive assumes a fricative —sometimes a voiced—value after a vowel also, except in the case of t : which retains its normal unaspirated, unvoiced value even after a vowel.

2. The value of this *auxiliary* phoneme, which must *always* be followed by a hard consonant, was variable during the time of Tholkappiam; it acquired a phonetic value identical with that of the following hard consonant, vide 1 (c) above,

e.g., எஃகு became ehhu

Later its value became fixed as h, irrespective of the following consonant.

Note. (i) With a view to keep down transliteration to the minimum it is suggested that, in the case of Tamil words which are already in free use in English (e.g., Tamil = Thamil), or where it is unnecessary to indicate the exact pronunciation, accurate transliteration need not be resorted to. In the case of proper names etc., which occur more than once in the same article, the transliteration need be shown only once in brackets side by side with a free English adaptation, the latter alone being used subsequently, except of course in cases where such a procedure will lead to ambiguity,

e.g., வேங்கடம் = Vengadam (Ve : ngkat : am).

(ii) Reference may be made to *Tamil Culture,* Vol. IV, No. 1 (January 1955 issue) pp. 58-73 for fuller details.

Statement about ownership and other particulars about Newspaper "TAMIL CULTURE" to be published in the first issue every year after the last day of February.

FORM IV

(See Rule 8)

1.	Place of Publication	MADRAS
2.	Periodicity of its publication	Quarterly
3.	Printer's Name	K. S. S. Rajan for T. K. Venkatesan
	Nationality	Indian
	Address	The Jupiter Press Private Ltd., 109-C, Mount Road, Madras-18
4.	Publisher's Name	Dr. M. Varadarajan
	Nationality	Indian
	Address	For The Academy of Tamil Culture 5-B, Aiyavu Naidu Street, Madras-30
5.	Editor's Name	Rev. Dr. Xavier S. Thani Nayagam,
	Nationality	Ceylonese
	Address	Chief Editor, "Tamil Culture", 5-B, Aiyavu Naidu Street, Madras-30
6.	Names and Addresses of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one per cent of the total capital.	The Academy of Tamil Culture

I, M. Varadarajan, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

For The Academy of Tamil Culture

M. VARADARAJAN

Date: 17—4—1957

Signature of Publisher.

THE TAMIL SCRIPT

(This table is given for the guidance of those who wish to read Tamil texts which often appear in TAMIL CULTURE)

Vowels	Vowel symbols attached to preceding consonant.	Hard consonants						Soft consonants						Medium consonants					
		k	c	t:	th	p	t	ng	nj	n:	nh	m	n	y	r	l	v	l-	l:
அ a	nil	க	ச	ட	த	ப	ற	ங	ஞ	ண	ந	ம	ன	ய	ர	ல	வ	ழ	ள
ஆ a:	ா to the right of the consonant	கா					றா			ணா			னா						
இ i	ி to be *joined* at the top —right of consonant	கி																	
ஈ i:	ீ to be *joined* at the top —right of consonant	கீ																	
உ u	a semi-circle ு, a vertical stroke ு or a loop ு to be *joined* to the bottom	கு	சு	டு	து	பு	று	ஙு	ஞு	ணு	நு	மு	னு	யு	ரு	லு	வு	ழு	ளு
ஊ u:	Same as for u, but with an additional stroke or loop	கூ	சூ	டூ	தூ	பூ	றூ	ஙூ	ஞூ	ணூ	நூ	மூ	னூ	யூ	ரூ	லூ	வூ	ழூ	ளூ
எ e	ெ to the left of the consonant	கெ																	
ஏ e:	ே to the left of the consonant	கே																	
ஐ ai	ை to the left of the consonant	கை								ணை			னை			லை			ளை
ஒ o	ெ to the left & ா to the right of the consonant	கொ					றொ			ணொ			னொ						
ஓ o:	ே to the left & ா to the right	கோ					றோ			ணோ			னோ						
ஔ au	ெ to the left & ள to the right	கௌ																	
மெய் pure consonants	A ot · on the top of the consonant	க்																	

Note.—(1) The vowels are written as shown in the first vertical column.

(2) The consonants are written as shown in the horizontal columns, with a symbol or symbols indicating the vowel immediately following. A consonant followed by the vowel அ (a) has no symbol, while the pure consonant not followed by a vowel has a dot on top.

(3) All the eighteen vowel consonants under க (k) are shown as a guide; in other cases only the irregular forms are shown, the rest being exactly similar to those shown under க (k), excepting for trivial differences in a few cases which might safely be ignored.

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Subscriptions, advertisements, and remittances should be addressed to : The Manager, *Tamil Culture*, 5-B Aiyavu Naidu Street, Madras-30.

Subscriptions are best remitted in the form of crossed Postal orders or cheques or Bank drafts *payable in India* drawn in favour of *Tamil Culture*. Cheques not drawn on a Bank in Madras should include the Bank's collecting commission of 8 annas. V. P. P. charges are extra.

Subscriptions and remittances may also be remitted to :

CEYLON : Colombo Book Centre, 20, Parsons Road, Colombo.

MALAYA : Manager, *Tamil Murasu*, 71, Selegie Road, Singapore 7.

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION (effective from 1956) :

	India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya	U. K.	U. S. A. & other countries
Annual	**Rs. 7**	**Sh. 12/6**	**U. S. $ 2·00 or** its equivalent
Single Copy	**Rs. 2**	**Sh. 4**	**U. S. $ 0·75.**

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Published by Dr. M. Varadarajan for Academy of Tamil Culture, 5-B, Aiyavu Naidu Street, Madras-30 and printed by K. S. S. Rajan at The Jupiter Press Private Ltd., 109-C, Mount Road, Madras-18.